



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LONG-TERM CARE PROVIDER ASSOCIATIONS ISSUE JOINT RELEASE:
*Heroic efforts made by providers to protect our most vulnerable citizens during
pandemic. Where is their support?***

TOPEKA, Kan -- It cannot be denied that nursing homes and assisted housing are the true frontline in the war against COVID-19. Nursing homes are enduring the greatest concentration of outbreaks, and deaths, in Kansas and across the nation. The numbers are heartbreaking.

The long-term care system was in crisis long before the COVID-19 pandemic started. Our providers are putting forth heroic efforts to care for older Kansans while our funding and workforce shortages continue to explode. Adult care homes have very little testing, and the vast majority lack adequate personal protective equipment for residents and staff. They have no priority access to masks, and no ability to compete for them on the open market. Nursing homes already on the financial brink are facing an extra \$240,000 a month in costs to care for one COVID-19 positive resident in their building. If the virus spreads, the home must find an additional \$640,000 a month to properly treat and contain the virus. Those financial resources do not exist, and we have received no promises that aid will be coming.

Our society often places a lower value on the lives of older people. That has never been more apparent than in this pandemic. The same can be said for long-term care workers who endure the same risks as other health care workers, but with less applause, less pay and even less hope of protective masks.

We see nursing homes being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreaks in their buildings, even though they have the least priority, supplies and funding out of every health care provider in this country. Without enough masks, timely testing and emergency funding, the protection of long-term care residents and staff will fail. Nursing homes have been in lockdown for over a month, perform symptom checks on residents and staff every day, and push their infection control programs into overdrive. What no one wants to acknowledge is that lockdowns and symptom screenings only take us so far. A high percentage of the virus is spread by people who have no symptoms or have yet to show symptoms,



especially in the elderly population. This means that despite their best efforts, nursing homes catch COVID-19 infections in their building when it's already too late.

The 50,000 long-term care residents and 40,000 long-term care workers in our state deserve better.

Long-term care providers are doing their part every day to aggressively prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, as we deliver compassionate care under challenging circumstances. We call on our communities and elected leaders to join us on the frontlines of this pandemic, and make long-term care a priority for PPE supplies, same-day testing and emergency financial aid. Together we can stem the tide of infection for older people and their caregivers and grant them the priority status they so desperately need.

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[LeadingAge Kansas](#), [Kansas Health Care Association](#) and [Kansas Adult Care Executives](#) are state associations representing nearly all long-term care and senior housing providers in Kansas. Our collective 400 member organizations serve more than 50,000 older Kansans and employ more than 40,000 Kansans all across the state.