



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of Matt Barrett, President and CEO the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities/Connecticut Center for Assisted Living (CAHCF/CCAL) and Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge:

YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH COVID-19 NURSING HOME STUDY AFFIRMS EMERGING CONSENSUS THAT CONNECTICUT'S HIGH COMMUNITY SPREAD, UNKNOWN ASSYMPTOMIC TRANSMISSION, AND UNAVAILABILITY OF TESTING FOR NURSING HOME RESIDENTS AND STAFF EXPLAIN CONNECTICUT'S EARLY COVID-19 DEATHS IN ELDERLY CONGREGATE SETTINGS.

Connecticut's largest nursing home and assisted living provider associations recommend all state's experiencing a surge in Covid-19 cases take heed of the Yale School of Public Health study's findings as a matter of urgency and that Connecticut stay the course in our diligence to keep community prevalence of the virus down as we continue planning for a fall resurgence of the virus.

"In anticipation of a preliminary report commissioned by Governor Lamont evaluating Connecticut's COVID-19 response in nursing homes (to be released 8-15-20), [research conducted by the Yale School of Public Health published in JAMA](#) this week affirms an emerging consensus among academic researchers and public health experts that the unknown asymptomatic carrier of the COVID-19 virus was a main factor in explaining the dramatic and devastating spread of the virus experienced earlier this year in Connecticut's nursing homes and congregate senior living settings and it was only through comprehensive testing, which was largely unavailable to Connecticut nursing homes early in the pandemic, that the spread was able to be brought under control.

Researchers found that that large scale unknown asymptomatic transmission of the virus in Connecticut, not yet understood by the nation's scientific and medical community, could only have been uncovered through a comprehensive nursing home testing program such as the one implemented by Connecticut nursing homes in May and June of this year. A testing and cohorting strategy was critical to stopping the spread of the virus, but was only possible to be implemented once nursing homes were able to obtain the testing resources which were not available in the early months of the pandemic.

The Yale Public Health School's research is being published at a critically important juncture as Connecticut nursing homes, assisted living communities and state public health officials now plan for the potential fall resurgence of the virus. The research has critical significance for states like Connecticut that are reviewing their early pandemic experience and planning for a fall resurgence, but also serves as an immensely important advisory for states across the country that are currently surging, especially in the South and western United States. We are urging the federal government and all state's to immediately heed the findings in the Yale research and to place a priority on the implementation of comprehensive testing strategies in elderly congregate settings.

Once more, the Yale research underscores that that testing is an essential component, but only part of an overall strategy against Covid-19. Adequate levels of PPE, ensuring adequate staffing, and enhanced COVID-19 infection control measures (universal masking, hand hygiene and social distancing) are all critical elements of such a strategy. And of course, keeping the prevalence of COVID-19 down in the community is extremely important. The research is clear that low COVID-19 prevalence in the community will mean low penetration in nursing homes and other senior congregate living settings.

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For additional background, please find below the links to the CAHCF/CCAL and LeadingAge Connecticut presentations from the July 21 Public Health and Human Services Committees' Nursing Home Covid-19 Information Hearing:

[CAHCF/CCAL Statement](#)

[LeadingAge Connecticut Statement](#)