

1. Netherlands allowed visitation early - does that contribute to their relatively higher mortality compared to similar countries?

The Dutch took a very systematic approach to reopening nursing homes. A [26-facility study](#) conducted in the Netherlands suggested it was safe to allow visitors to long-term care facilities, even those with active cases of covid-19 infection. Criteria included spacing visits to a facility through the day and week, allowing one visitor per resident, and requiring distancing or personal protective equipment. No resurgence of covid infections ensued, and the Dutch government reopened nursing homes to visitors using these guidelines.

2. Do Community Colleges offer any training or certificates for nursing home workers?

Some Community Colleges offer training for nursing home staff. This can include 75-100 hours of required training for the nurse aide certification. Given shortages of nursing home workers, it will be important to expand training opportunities and continue to offer ladder programs that allow staff to get additional degrees.

3. Many were not working or were working from home and were able to care for loved ones at home but as people go back to work I anticipate nursing home occupancy will improve

I agree that nursing home occupancy will improve some in the short-term. However, I am skeptical that it will return to pre-pandemic levels. In the longer-term, the aging baby boomers will also need services so there will likely be a need for more beds down-the-road.

4. What about adult foster care in the array of solutions?

Adult foster care programs are an important source of long-term care in many parts of the US. They are typically much smaller in size than assisted living facilities. From an infection control perspective, their smaller size likely helped protect residents during the pandemic. I think these models can be an important source of care moving forward but key questions involve quality oversight, Medicaid coverage, and access to care.

5. Is there any advice you would offer to individuals currently considering/seeking assisted housing options for a family member?

My advice is to first educate yourself on the different options. Assisted housing can take a number of different forms and talking to someone at the Area Agency on Aging or an Ombudsperson can be invaluable. I would avoid engaging with services that get a "kickback" for directing individuals to particular providers. It is also important to understand whether your family member will qualify for Medicaid or pay privately. The payer source and affordability will also help to dictate options. My final piece of advice is to find places where the staff are happy and engaged. Long-term care facilities are only as good as their staff. I tell people to worry less about glass chandeliers and focus on the culture and the staff.