

CMS Sending Abbott BinaxNOW to HHA and Hospices Nationally

What You Should Know

Health and Human Services (HHS) is distributing, without cost, 150 million rapid antigen or Point of Care tests to nursing homes (SNFs and ICFs), assisted living facilities, home health agencies and hospices. The distribution will continue through December 2020.

CHAP has learned that organizations have begun to receive shipments as of 9/28/2020. This first box of tests is being provided at no cost to the HHAs and hospices.

HHS is providing a box of 50 Abbott BinaxNOW™ COVID-19 Ag Card tests without cost. Per the HHS Fact sheet, test distribution is to the largest 100+ home health and hospice agencies per mail.

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/abbott-binaxnow-fact-sheet.pdf>. Governors and state health departments have also been advised of the distribution.

NOTE: Currently, there is no specific mandate for staff testing in Home Health or Hospice Agencies. **These tests are provided to support the home health agencies and hospices that must provide evidence of testing to care for patients in nursing home and assisted living facilities.**

- **Purpose of the Rapid Antigen Test:** The use of the test is for staff screening, not testing of HHA or hospice patients.
- **Agency obligations to conduct testing**
 - A CLIA Waiver is required to use the testing – if you have a waiver, check with your health department if the BinaxNOW needs to be added,
 - If your Organization does not have a waiver, you need to obtain one before testing.
- **Training of staff:**
 - From Abbott: <https://www.globalpointofcare.abbott/en/support/product-installation-training/navica-brand/navica-binaxnow-ag-training.html>
 - A webinar conducted by HHS and Abbott was presented on September 25, 2020. Recording not yet posted as of 10/1/2020.
- **If your organization receives a supply:**
 - The kits are sent to either the Administrator or the responsible person of record.
 - The box may include an invoice – DON'T PANIC- There is no cost for this initial shipment. A separate letter will follow explaining the initial kits are free. The process about how to obtain more kits is provided.
 - Mandatory reporting to your public health department is required per the HHS statement, contact your health department about how this is to be done.