

Eli's Hospice Insider

Hospice News: Take The Time To Update Your EP Plan In Light Of CMS Letter

If the Zika virus, Ebola, and other types of infections aren't covered in your Emergency Preparedness plan, it's time for an update. So indicates a recent letter from the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** to State Survey Agency Directors.

Reminder: CMS issued an emergency preparedness rule, including requirements for EP testing and exercises, in November 2016 with a compliance date of November 2017 (see Eli's Hospice Insider, Vol. 10, No. 8).

Now, the survey letter updates Appendix Z of the State Operations Manual, regarding providers' EP duties. "CMS is adding 'emerging infectious diseases' to the current definition of all-hazards approach," the letter says. "After review, CMS determined it was critical for facilities to include planning for infectious diseases within their emergency preparedness program. In light of events such as the Ebola Virus and Zika, we believe that facilities should consider preparedness and infection prevention within their all-hazards approach, which covers both natural and man-made disasters."

See the letter, QSO19-06-ALL, at

www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Downloads/QSO19-06-ALL.pdf.