



UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
**HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, & PENSIONS**  
RANKING MEMBER, SENATOR PATTY MURRAY

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Murray, Colleagues Urge Trump Administration  
to Track COVID-19 in Congregate Care Facilities to  
Protect People with Disabilities and Older  
Americans**

*In a letter, Senators urge the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to collect and report COVID-19 data in congregate care facilities—including assisted living facilities, institutions for people with disabilities, group homes, and mental health facilities*

*Senators: “Despite the high risk of contracting COVID-19 for older Americans, children and adults with mental illness, and children and adults with disabilities ... in congregate care settings, there are huge gaps in federal reporting requirements for these facilities.”*

**(Washington, D.C.)** – Today, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), ranking member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, joined by Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), sent a [letter](#) urging Center for Medicare and

Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Seema Verma to protect people with disabilities and older Americans and finally expand data collection and reporting on COVID-19 cases in congregate care facilities—including assisted living facilities, institutions for people with disabilities, and mental health facilities. Despite how critical data collection is to identifying and responding to COVID-19 outbreaks, current gaps in CMS guidance are leaving many people with disabilities and older Americans at risk.

**“Despite the high risk of contracting COVID-19 for older Americans, children and adults with mental illness, and children and adults with disabilities living in or receiving services in congregate care settings, there are huge gaps in federal reporting requirements for these facilities,”** wrote the Senators in a [letter](#) to Administrator Verma. **“As a result, federal government officials, public health experts, and the public have no comprehensive information on COVID-19 occurrence and fatality rates in various congregate care settings—all while residents continue to face a significant public health threat.”**

In their [letter](#), the Senators note that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has already issued guidance on nursing homes recommending that states issue new reporting requirements and conduct inspections. But despite the similar risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in other congregate care settings, the Trump Administration has lacked federal guidance for other facilities that serve people with disabilities and older Americans.

The only system to monitor COVID-19 in these facilities is an inadequate patch-work of optional federal guidelines and disparate state-level reporting requirements. In fact, a review of state-level requirements revealed that only nine states currently report on institutions for people with disabilities, only seven report on group homes, and only two report on mental health facilities.

To address this troubling gap in the nation’s ability to track and respond to COVID-19 outbreaks, the Senators demanded that Administrator Verma expand current federal reporting regulations beyond nursing homes to include other congregate care facilities and take immediate action in response to serious health and safety findings.