Almost 26,000 Americans died from COVID-19 in nursing homes

The report prepared for governors comes as lockdowns ease across the nation and world.

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and CURT ANDERSON
WASHINGTON — At least a quarter of the COVID-19 deaths in the United States were among nursing-home residents, a new report said, a disclosure that came as coronavirus restrictions eased Monday even as U.S. protests against police brutality sparked fears of new outbreaks.

The Florida Keys welcomed tourists for the first time in two months, the Colosseum opened its ancient doors in Rome, ferries resumed service in Greece. But as tourist destinations worldwide reopened for business, new rules went into place to guard against the virus’ spread.

“Brilliant medical coverages, gloves, hand sanitizer, safe rooms, and physical distancing can be a great way to prevent the spread,” Lamont said in a release Tuesday.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 44,900 cases of coronavirus illness among nursing-home residents, according to a copy of a letter addressed to the governors and an accompanying chart provided to The Associated Press.

The data was based on reports received from about 80 percent of the nation’s 15,600 nursing homes as of May 24. But some states with high ratios of nursing-home deaths appeared to have low levels of response in the survey, intended as a first step toward developing policy changes.

“This data, and anecdotal reports across the country, clearly show that nursing homes have been devastat-
ed by the virus,” wrote CDC Director Robert Redfield and CMS Administrator Seema Verma. “The U.S. has seen over 144,000 deaths and nearly 2 million infections in the pandemic.

And although the first waves of the pandemic may be easing as much of the U.S. that doesn’t mean nursing homes are in any less danger. Experts say in a virus rebound they can again become the state for tragic scenes of death and disease, as well as a risk for the broader community.

“What is going on in a nursing home can be a barometer for where the virus is,” said Tamara Konetzka, a research professor at the University of Chicago, who specializes in long-term care policies.

Bassilica were taken down shortly after mid-night near Key Largo, the northernmost island in the Florida chain, where almost all the hotels were closed and many of the restaurants remain empty.

Countries around the Mediterranean Sea also tentatively kicked off a summer season where tourists could bask on their beaches and visit distances in place.

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Alonso-Zaldivar and for generations to come.

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