



CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) PREPARING FOR COVID-19 IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

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Interim Guidance for Healthcare Facilities

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-hcf.html>

1. Key goals for US healthcare systems in response to COVID-19 outbreak are:
 - a. Reduce morbidity and mortality.
 - b. Minimize disease transmission.
 - c. Protect healthcare personnel.
 - d. Preserve healthcare systems functioning.
2. Actions to take to prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19
 - a. Educate staff on how COVID-19 spreads, clinical management, and recommendations for infection prevention and control.
 - b. Explore alternatives to face-to-face triage and visits.
 - c. Plan to optimize the facilities supply of personal protective equipment (PPE).

- d. Prepare facility to safely triage and manage patients with respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19.
 - e. Plan to take actions if COVID-19 is spreading in the community:
 - i. Work collaboratively with local and state public health organizations, healthcare coalitions, and other local partners.
 - ii. Designate staff who have been adequately trained to be responsible for caring for suspected cases of COVID-19.
 - iii. Monitor healthcare workers and ensure maintenance of essential healthcare facility staff and operations.
 - iv. When possible, manage mildly ill COVID-19 patients at home.
 - v. Promote the increased use of telehealth systems.
3. Considerations for outpatient facilities:
- a. Re-schedule non-urgent outpatient visits.
 - b. Consider reaching out to patients with higher risk of COVID-19 (elderly, those with chronic medical co-morbidities).
 - c. Require symptomatic patients to call ahead of clinic visits.
 - d. Consider accelerating the timing of high priority screening.
 - e. Make clinic visit re-scheduling and cancellations easier on patients.
4. Considerations for inpatient facilities:
- a. Re-schedule elective surgeries as necessary.
 - b. When feasible, shift elective urgent diagnostic and surgical procedures to outpatient settings.
 - c. Plan for a surge of critically ill patients and identify additional space to care for them.
5. Considerations for long term care facilities:
- a. Limit visitors to the facility.
 - b. Post visual alerts (signs and posters) at entrances and in strategic places.
 - c. Ensure supplies are adequate.
 - d. Take steps to prevent known or suspected cases of COVID-19 from infecting other patients.
 - e. Identify dedicated staff to care for COVID-19 patients.

Steps for Healthcare Facilities to Prepare for COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/steps-to-prepare.html>

1. Be prepared.
 - a. Stay informed about COVID-19 situations.
 - b. Develop, or review, your facility's emergency plan.
 - c. Establish relationships with key healthcare and public health partners in the community.
 - d. Create an emergency contact list.
2. Communicate with staff and patients.
 - a. Communicate about COVID-19 with your staff.
 - b. Communicate about COVID-19 with your patients.
3. Protect workforce.
 - a. Screen patients and visitors for symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever, cough, difficulty breathing) before entering the facilities.
 - b. Ensure proper use of PPE.
 - c. Conduct inventory of available PPE.
 - d. Encourage sick employees to stay at home.
4. Protect patients.
 - a. Stay up to date on relevant information on COVID-19.
 - b. Separate patients with respiratory symptoms from other patients seeking care.
 - c. Consider strategies for taking care of patients at home, when feasible, in order to prevent potential exposures at the facilities.

Strategies to Prevent Spread of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html>

1. Steps to take before cases of COVID-19 are identified in the facility or community.
 - a. Educate residents, healthcare personnel, and visitors.
 - i. Review and share CDC's latest information on COVID-19.
 - ii. Educate and train healthcare personnel.
 - iii. Educate residents and personnel.

- b. Provide supplies for recommended infection prevention and control practices.
 - i. Hand hygiene supplies.
 - ii. Respiratory hygiene and etiquette.
 - iii. Personal protective equipment.
 - iv. Environmental cleaning and disinfection.
2. Evaluate and manage healthcare professionals with symptoms of respiratory illness.
 - a. Implement flexible sick leave policies.
 - b. Require healthcare personnel to regularly monitor themselves for fever and respiratory symptoms.
 - c. Develop and review strategies for managing and mitigating staffing shortages, especially in the event of community outbreak of COVID-19.
3. Evaluate and manage residents with symptoms of respiratory infections.
 - a. Ask residents to report if they feel feverish or have symptoms of respiratory infections.
 - b. Promptly assess residents for fever and respiratory infections upon admission and throughout their stay.
 - c. Implement appropriate infection prevention practices for symptomatic residents.
 - d. Use Standard Contact, and Droplet Precautions with eye protection for any undiagnosed respiratory infection.
4. Consider new policies and procedures for visitors, healthcare personnel, and residents:
 - a. When there are cases of COVID-19 in the community but not in the facility.
 - b. When there are cases of COVID-19 in the facility or sustained transmission in the community.

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