

March 31, 2020

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To: Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities

Subject: COVID-19 Resources for LTC Facilities
Screening

This communication is to provide an update on various issues. Please note there are important updates in the information below.

- 1. All facilities are required to complete a screening of all staff for symptoms** of COVID-19 prior to work each day. Guidance on the screening process can be found in the attached "Essential Services Screening Recommendations and Signage."

2. Masking

Per the Delaware Division of Public Health State Health Operations Center:

Each facility should evaluate the risk of each individual category of employee to determine the level of masking that is necessary for their facility.

- All employees providing direct patient care are expected to wear procedural/surgical face masks, at all times, while in the clinical setting.
- Those employees that do not have direct patient contact may fall into a lower risk category, thus may not need to wear a surgical mask. Facilities should develop protocols that cover non-direct-care personnel. Alternative masks could also be considered.
- Healthcare personnel performing aerosolizing procedures for presumed COVID-19 (rule out) or known COVID-19 positive patients should wear N95 respirators.

All personnel should make every effort to help preserve the supply of PPE and reduce the need for replacement masks whenever possible. Infection prevention guidelines should be followed on the use and re-use of procedure/surgical masks. Damaged procedure/surgical masks should be discarded in the trash. CDC Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>

When providing direct patient care to symptomatic and COVID+ patients, all direct care personnel should be in full PPE (gown, gloves, mask and eye protection).

Infection Prevention Guidance on Procedure/Surgical Mask Use and Re-Use

To doff facemask with intent to reuse

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Remove mask
 - a. Remove procedure mask by holding the ear loops. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully.
 - b. Remove surgical mask by untying lower ties FIRST. Untie upper ties last. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly
3. After removing facemask, visually inspect for contamination, distortion in shape/form. If soiled, torn, or saturated the mask should be discarded.
4. If the facemask is NOT visibly soiled, torn, or saturated, facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.
5. Perform hand hygiene

To Re-Don Mask

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Grasp mask
 - a. Pinch procedure mask at the ear loops or
 - b. Grasp upper ties on surgical mask
3. Place over face
 - a. For procedure mask: Secure ear loops behind the ears. Secure mask.
 - b. For surgical mask: Secure upper ties first, behind head. End by securing lower ties behind head.
4. Perform hand hygiene

A disposable facemask can be worn throughout your shift if not visibly soiled, torn or saturated, and NOT touched while delivering patient care.

Finally, place a mask on symptomatic patients (as able) when performing patient care. Also, if symptomatic patients are sent out (dialysis, etc.) the patient should wear a mask.

3. **The Delaware Division of Public Health Call Center has established a line for long term care facility questions.** Going forward please refer questions regarding long term care facility issues to the call center at (866) 408-1899 ext.2.
4. **The State Health Operations Center (SHOC) will be having a weekly call each Friday at 11:00 AM to update the nursing and assisted living facilities on the latest COVID-19 information. Call information is as follows:**

Conf. Call 302-526-5475
Participant 204027#

**** Please place your call on mute when entering the call. In addition, please do not place your phone on hold.**

5. **The “SHOC Status Update” is here** and is posted on the DPH Coronavirus website at <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/177/2020/03/LTC-Facilities-SHOC-Status-fillable.pdf> . Complete and return the form to SHOC@delaware.gov by 4:30 PM each Wednesday until further notice.
Instructions for a fillable PDF:
 - a. Please download the form and open it in Adobe Reader (or other Adobe software). If you open in your browser, you won't be able to 'save' your inputs.
 - b. Save the form to your desktop. Fill it out. Save again.
 - c. Attach the form to an email and send to SHOC@DELAWARE.GOV
6. **Communicable disease reporting requirements remain unchanged at this time.** Should you have any questions or issues related to staff/patient exposure please contact the Office of Epidemiology at 888-295-5156.
7. **The “SHOC Resource Request Form” and instructions to request additional supplies (i.e. PPE) are here.**
Please also provide the additional following information:
 - Documentation from your normal PPE supplier stating they are unable to fulfill PPE supply requests.
 - Signed N95 acceptance letter returned should you be requesting N95 respirators (2nd page of policy)

- Has your agency been fit tested for N95 respirators in the past? If so, please specify which model. If not, and you are requesting 3M N95 respirators, please identify the model number: 1860 or 1870?
- What is your average weekly patient census?

All requests must be sent to OEMS@delaware.gov

Please note that the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) has received many requests and all request are triaged according to the protocol established by the OEMS. The in-state stockpile of personal protective equipment is limited. All resource requests are reviewed and items are disbursed based on federally designated priorities and supply availability. Please understand that these are challenging times and each agency/facility must employ all appropriate measures to conserve PPE.

8. **N95 Masks:** While some CPAP/BPAP circuits have filters to contain/close the circuit and reduce aerosolization, CDC guidance includes the use of N95 for aerosol-generating procedures including CPAP/BiPAP.

Guidance for Extended and Reuse of N95 Masks During Pandemic is [here](#).

9. **Health Alert Notice: STRATEGIES FOR OPTIMIZING THE SUPPLY OF PPE-N95 RESPIRATORS**

<https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/php/alerts/dhan427.html>

10. **DNRs:** DNRs (COVID+ or COVID-) should remain at the LTC facility in which they reside and be provided comfort measures as you normally would.

11. **Shelter in place:** Symptomatic residents should not be sent to the ED for testing or for admission to the hospital for treatment. Symptomatic residents should remain at the facility, be tested as appropriate, and the facility should follow the Office of Epidemiology (888-295-5156) instructions regarding where to drop the specimen off. PLEASE NOTE - residents who suffer a life-threatening event should still be sent to the ED for triage and treatment.

12. **State Lab Testing:** The DPH lab has made testing for LTC facilities a priority. Before collecting a sample from your resident, call the Office of Epidemiology (888-295-5156) and follow their instructions.

13. **CDC Preparedness Checklist:**

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/novel-coronavirus-2019-Nursing-Homes-Preparedness-Checklist_3_13.pdf and here:

14. **Jewish Family Services Telehealth Counseling Information:**

As you deal with the ever-changing news associated with COVID-19, as well as the physical separation from your loved ones, you may experience a need to reach out for support and assistance. Our sister agency, Jewish Family Services (JFS) has offered their help. Much like the Kutz Senior Living Campus, JFS services those of all faiths and cultures, while embracing Jewish traditions and values. JFS Delaware is here to help anyone who needs mental health support and services, especially during stressful times. Their compassionate and professional team, including licensed therapists and psychiatrists, is prepared to respond to the changing needs of our community; JFS accepts most insurance plans. If you or a loved one is experiencing mental health concerns, including increased anxiety, please call JFS at 302-478-9411. And, JFS is ready and able to provide support remotely. For information and updates about JFS services, visit www.jfsdelaware.org.

15. Alzheimer's Association: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Tips for Dementia Caregivers:
[https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

16. Criminal Background Check Locations: To remain consistent with current public health guidelines, these offices are available by **appointment only** – Call 302-739-2528 to schedule an appointment.

- a. New Castle County: Delaware State Police Troop 2, on Route 40, Bear, DE
- b. Kent County: Blue Hen Corporate Center, 655 South Bay Road, Suite 1B, Dover, DE
- c. Sussex County: Thurman Adams State Service Center, 546 S. Bedford Street, Room 202, Georgetown, DE

Link to Delaware State Police website: <https://dsp.delaware.gov/obtaining-a-certified-criminal-history/>

17. Emergency Childcare

The YMCA is offering child care for essential worker. The link to the Y's Emergency Child Care Program at Bear-Glasgow, Brandywine and Sussex is: <https://www.ymcade.org/emergency-child-care/>

Care will be available for school-age children (5-12 years old) from 6:30 am- 6:30 pm Monday-Friday. Children will enjoy arts, crafts, games, sports, movies, and supervision from experienced Y staff. Spots are limited. Registrants will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. The cost is \$75 per day, per child. Payment will secure your spot for the entire operating day.

COVID-19 Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-hcp.html

Delaware Division of Public Health:

- Website: <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/epi/2019novelcoronavirus.html>
- Link for Division of Public Health guidance for healthcare personnel:
<https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/resources-medical-providers/>
- Call Center for Questions about COVID-19 in Delaware: 1-866-408-1899, TTY at 1-800-232-5460 or email dphcall@delaware.gov

Website for Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Memos:

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions>

Thank you in advance and stay healthy.