

PPE Guidelines

High Pointe House

Caring for community caseloads during a pandemic

This document guides the community health/hospice clinician through all procedures that have been developed to address the COVID-19 pandemic. As this pandemic evolves and the situation changes, these guidelines may be updated. Thank you for your commitment to our patients.



Patients arriving from a hospital or facility are required to have a negative test result prior to the High Pointe House admission. Patients transferring to High Pointe House from home will be screened by a community nurse. Screening results will be entered into EPIC. If the patient is positive or presumptive an alert will be placed in the patient record. Patients transferring to the High Pointe House from the home setting will be additionally screened by antigen COVID testing either prior to transport or upon arrival to the High Pointe House.

Section 1: Screening for patients transferring to High Pointe House from home

A. All patients will be screened by a community nurse to determine PPE protocol at High Pointe House. Upon arrival, patient will be tested for COVID-19. Patient will continue to be screened daily by facility staff.

1. Is the patient experiencing the new onset or worsening of any of the following symptoms?
 - a. _____ FEVER OR CHILLS
 - b. _____ COUGH
 - c. _____ SHORTNESS OF BREATH
 - d. _____ FATIGUE
 - e. _____ CONGESTION OR RUNNY NOSE
 - f. _____ HEADACHE
 - g. _____ SORE THROAT
 - h. _____ LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL
 - i. _____ MUSCLE OR BODY ACHES
 - j. _____ NAUSEA OR VOMITING
 - k. _____ DIARRHEA
2. Has the patient been tested due to active symptoms?
3. Is any household member of the patient COVID-positive?

B. If screening questions are negative, perform visit using universal precautions.

C. Actions for Positive Responses to Screening Questions

1. If COVID screen is positive:
 - a. Use enhanced droplet precautions and/or
 - b. Use precaution room if available.
 - c. PCR COVID test is required.
2. If COVID screen is presumptive:
 - a. Use enhanced droplet precautions.
 - b. Use precaution room if available.
 - c. PCR COVID test is required.



Section 2: PPE definitions, agency PPE par levels + processes for managing PPE at HPH

A. Universal Precautions

1. Patients, family members and volunteers are expected to wear masks regardless of vaccination status.
2. Patients are expected to wear a mask during visits unless directed to remove for teaching purposes and/or examination.
3. Type of patient visit
 - a. Negative COVID screen
 - b. All patients not COVID-presumptive or COVID-positive



Surgical mask



Hand hygiene



Gloves*

**Invasive procedure only*

B. Enhanced Droplet Precautions

1. Traditional N95 mask instead of surgical mask
2. Type of patient visit
 - a. Positive screen to the screening questions- contact clinical manager for relevance
 - b. COVID-presumptive or COVID-positive



N95 mask



Goggles



Gloves



Hand hygiene



Shield



Gown

PRECAUTION CHART	COVID-19+	COVID-19 Negative Patient in Rooms	Hallways/Lobby Screening Visitors	Café	Staff Break Room	Kitchen
Administration		Universal	Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
Housekeeping	Enhanced droplet precautions	Universal	Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
Kitchen		Universal	Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
MSW/Chaplain		Universal	Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
MDs/NPs Nurse/Aides	Enhanced droplet precautions	Universal	Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
Reception			Mask	Mask	Mask not required	Mask
Volunteers		Universal	Mask	Mask		

Section 3: Patient care guidelines for universal + enhanced droplet precaution patients

A. Care Strategies for Suspected and Confirmed Cases

A test-based strategy for discontinuing transmission-based enhanced droplet precautions is no longer recommended because, in the majority of cases, it results in prolonged isolation of patients who continue to shed detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA but who are no longer infectious.

1. Symptom-Based Strategy for Discontinuing Transmission-Based Enhanced Droplet Precautions:

- Patients with mild to moderate illness who are not severely immunocompromised:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.

Note: *For patients who are not severely immunocompromised and who were asymptomatic throughout their infection, transmission-based enhanced droplet precautions may be discontinued when at least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.*

- Patients with severe to critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised:
 - At least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

Note: *For severely immunocompromised patients who were asymptomatic throughout their infection, transmission-based enhanced droplet precautions may be discontinued when at least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.*

B. Patient Care Guidelines for COVID+ Patients

- a. Please refer to the posted guidelines located both inside and outside of the patient suite.

Revisions to these guidelines will occur as CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) guidance and recommendations are updated.