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## FOCUS POINT NEWSLETTER SPECIAL COVID-19 UPDATE March 23, 2019

### New CHC Resources

We continue to listen to you and develop resources that may be useful to you.

- **ALF – Emergent Infectious Disease – Novel Infections @ \$50.** This is an appropriate policy to add to your infection control manual and addresses general guidelines for use when there is a novel-infection outbreak. It is also useful to incorporate into your Emergency Preparedness Plan.



### FREE WEBINAR sponsored by HQIN

Be Prepared: Infection Prevention in Uncertain Times - Wednesday, March 25, 2020 2 pm (EST) – 30 minute training

Join HQIN to learn how to assess your facility infection prevention and control program and use resources to address the current concern for infectious disease transmission including

COVID-19.

Following this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Apply the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Critical Element Pathway to assess compliance with infection control F880, F881, F883
- Enhance compliance with standard precautions
- Implement transmission precautions

Register at: [https://solutions.us14.list-](https://solutions.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bcb2517ddb0d4ba3a6ead088&id=b5e0880ae4&e=c2d84fba51)

[manage.com/track/click?u=bcb2517ddb0d4ba3a6ead088&id=b5e0880ae4&e=c2d84fba51](https://solutions.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bcb2517ddb0d4ba3a6ead088&id=b5e0880ae4&e=c2d84fba51)



**Board of Nursing**

**Virginia Board of Nursing**

On March 19, 2020, Dr. David Brown, Director of the Department of Health Professions, waived certain Board of Nursing regulations with the goal of removing certain regulatory barriers to assist with education, testing, practice and workforce issues. During this public health threat, DHP is establishing temporary waivers to various regulations during the declared state of emergency.

- [Temporary waivers for Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing - Issued March 19, 2020](#)
- [Temporary waivers for Regulations Governing Nurse Practitioners - Issued March 19, 2020](#)
- [Temporary waivers for Regulations Governing Medication Aides - Issued March 19, 2020](#)
- [Temporary waivers for Regulations Governing Nursing Education Programs - Issued March 19, 2020](#)
- [Temporary waivers for Regulations for Nurse Aide Education Programs - Issued March 19, 2020](#)

To see all regulations for the Board of Nursing visit their [Laws & Regulations page](#)

### VDH Webinar 3-20-2020 -- COVID-19: What Assisted Living Facilities, PACE Sites, Adult Day Centers and Group Homes

Need to Know – VDH posted their webinar and slide presentation on their website which can be found at:

[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2020/03/ALF-COVID-19-Briefing\\_3.20.2020.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2020/03/ALF-COVID-19-Briefing_3.20.2020.pdf). This 30-minute presentation was packed with guidance for operational consideration. It is worth the review.



## **CDC UPDATE: Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 (Interim Guidance)**

Who this is for: Occupational health programs and public health officials making decisions about return to work for healthcare personnel (HCP) with confirmed COVID-19, or who have suspected COVID-19 (e.g., developed symptoms of a respiratory infection [e.g., cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever] but did not get tested for COVID-19). Decisions about return to work for HCP with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 should be made in the context of local circumstances. Options include a test-based strategy or a non-test-based strategy (i.e., time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy). The update may be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

### **Return to Work Criteria for HCP with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19**

Use one of the below strategies to determine when HCP may return to work in healthcare settings

#### **Test-based strategy. Exclude from work until**

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **and**
- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens)[1]. See Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

#### **Non-test-based strategy. Exclude from work until**

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery - defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and,**
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- If HCP were never tested for COVID-19, but have an alternate diagnosis (e.g., tested positive for influenza), criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis.

### **Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions** - After returning to work, HCP should:

- Wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette in CDC's interim infection control guidance (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles, etc.)
- Self-monitor for symptoms, and seek re-evaluation from occupational health if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen

### **Crisis Strategies to Mitigate Staffing Shortages**

Healthcare systems, healthcare facilities, and the appropriate state, local, territorial, and/or tribal health authorities might determine that the recommended approaches cannot be followed due to the need to mitigate HCP staffing shortages. In such scenarios:

- HCP should be evaluated by occupational health to determine appropriateness of earlier return to work than recommended above
- If HCP returns to work earlier than recommended above, they should still adhere to the Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions recommendations above. For more information, see CDC's Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with COVID-19.