

April 5, 2020

COVID-19 Updates (4/5/20)

COVID-19 Provider Forum

Please join us for our next COVID-19 Provider Forum tomorrow at 12:30 – 1 pm.

As you know, things are changing rapidly. Munson Healthcare is hosting an ongoing webinar series to help keep providers up to date on the state of our system and what you need to know. Provider Forums will be available online Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 12:30 – 1 pm.

Tomorrow's Faculty are:

- Mark Cannon, MD, PhD; Infectious Diseases, Munson Healthcare
- Megan Priebe, RN; System Lead, Infection Prevention, Munson Healthcare

A moderator will also field your questions. Due to time limitations, we won't be able to answer all questions. **Please focus questions for this forum on the topic of infectious disease and infection prevention.** To submit questions in advance: MHC-COVID-Physician-Questions@mhc.net

Providers and practice staff can easily join from a computer or mobile device. Chrome is the preferred browser.

What: Munson Healthcare COVID-19 Provider Forum

When: Monday, April 6, 12:30 – 1 pm

Register: [click here](#)

**If you are unable to attend during the live webinar, you can use this link to watch the webinar later.*

Links to upcoming Provider Forums are available online: munsonhealthcare.org/COVID-19Providers

Universal Masking FAQs

Do I need to keep my mask and bring it with me to the hospital?

Yes. As you leave the hospital, go to the screener station, sanitize your hands, remove the mask, put the mask back in your bag, and sanitize your hands again. **Bring your mask back with you.**

When **you** enter the hospital, go to the screener station, sanitize your hands, take your mask out of the bag, put it on and adjust as necessary, and sanitize your hands again.

DO NOT leave your mask in the bag at the hospital. Masking begins when you enter the screener station.

Should all patients be wearing face masks?

Yes, patients should wear a surgical mask in any waiting area and any time someone else is in their room. Please ensure that patients receive masks on the unit. If a patient is alone in their room, they make take off the mask. When taking their mask off, they should place their mask in the bag and sanitize their hands. To put the mask back on, they should sanitize their hands, take the mask out of the bag, put the mask back on their face, and sanitize their hands again. Patients and visitors may wear a Munson Healthcare issued mask OR their own hand-sewn or purchased masks as long as they are clean and not torn.

Should all visitors be wearing face masks?

Yes, all visitors are expected to wear a mask when in a clinical facility other than when eating or drinking. They will receive a surgical mask and paper bag at the screener station and will be asked to use it again if they return to the facility. Patients and visitors may wear a Munson Healthcare issued mask OR their own hand-sewn or purchased masks as long as they are clean and not torn.

Can a member of the Healthcare Team wear a homemade mask?

Thanks to the community support and our Supply Chain efforts, Munson Healthcare has an adequate, but not inexhaustible, supply of approved masks for our Healthcare Team. After clinical review, homemade or hand-sewn masks have been deemed inappropriate for health care staff use. All homemade items received at an approved Munson Healthcare drop-off site will be properly laundered and made available to asymptomatic patients and visitors as quantities allow.

Moving forward, hand-sewn masks will be a valuable resource for asymptomatic patients and visitors. Patients and visitors may wear a Munson Healthcare issued mask, hand-sewn or purchased masks as long as they are clean and not torn. We are grateful to our many community members for their tireless efforts in making these hand-sewn items for patients, visitors or the public. Hand-sewn masks align with the new Federal Government recommendations advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus.

Why are we moving to universal making?

Given what we have learned about COVID-19, this universal mask approach will serve to:

1. Protect our Healthcare Team, patients and visitors if a healthcare worker has asymptomatic COVID-19 infection or develops symptoms while at work (a mask achieves source control and decreases the risk of spreading infection).
2. Protect our Healthcare Team should they come in close contact with an individual with either asymptomatic or mild COVID-19 infection or who has symptoms that have not yet been recognized.

Why are we recommending a surgical mask and not an N95 respirator?

Similar to influenza and other respiratory viruses, COVID-19 appears to be transmitted primarily through large respiratory droplets. Surgical masks protect against respiratory droplet spread. Wearing surgical masks in a more generalized manner may help to prevent spread from persons with asymptomatic shedding or persons with very mild disease. Finally, wearing a surgical mask helps

contain respiratory secretions and may prevent an infected provider from spreading the virus to patients or coworkers.

In contrast, N95 respirators are used in clinical situations where aerosolization is occurring. This is for specific clinical situations, such as when a patient is intubated or undergoes bronchoscopy.

Does the universal mask policy apply to every member of the Healthcare Team, patients and visitors throughout the Munson Healthcare system?

The universal mask policy applies to all areas where clinical care is provided. We have defined these areas as all locations in our hospitals, ambulatory clinics, community health centers, Home Health and Hospice House.

Healthcare Team members working in buildings where no clinical care is provided should not wear masks in order to conserve stock for patient care. These employees should practice social distancing, respiratory etiquette, and frequent hand hygiene.

Many Incident Commands Moving Outside the Hospital

As part of elevating our pandemic response status level to orange and limiting the number of people inside our hospitals, many Incident Command teams throughout the system are moving to locations outside of the hospital. In addition, they are identifying which members of Incident Command need to be onsite and which can be remote. This is to ensure we are practicing appropriate social distancing and everyone is doing their part to reduce entry into clinical facilities to preserve PPE. If you have questions about the location of your entity incident command, please contact them directly. A list of all Incident Command emails is available on the [intranet](#).

