



Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Exposure and Quarantine FAQs March 14, 2020

We all have evaluated or treated patients with COVID-19. As health care workers (HCWs), it is important to protect ourselves and our patients by following the recommended guidance for COVID-19. The following *Frequently Asked Questions and Responses* have been prepared by the Department of Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C) and Workforce Health & Safety (WH&S). This applies to both clinical and non-clinical staff.

When caring for a patient who becomes a PUI for suspected COVID-19, what should HCWs do?

- All HCWs entering the patient's room or having contact with the patient should sign a room log and wear appropriate PPE
- If you are feeling well and have NO respiratory symptoms, you can continue to work as usual. You should monitor yourself for symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue or diarrhea).
- SARS-CoV-2 (the virus causing COVID-19) results for the PUI are generally available in 24 to 48 hours. At this point we will know whether the PUI tests negative or if the PUI tests positive and therefore becomes a confirmed COVID-19 case.
- If you develop ANY symptoms, you should put on a mask, notify your supervisor, and call WH&S (number below). *PLEASE DO NOT WORK EVEN IF YOU HAVE MILD SYMPTOMS. You are potentially exposing your colleagues, patients, and visitors.*

If a HCW cared for a patient who is later confirmed to have COVID-19, what will happen next?

- It may take 24-48 hours to determine if a patient has COVID-19.
- Supervisors, program directors, IP&C, and WH&S work together to evaluate potential exposures to COVID-19. Exposures are considered high/medium/low risk based on time spent with the patient, the type of patient care, and the type of PPE worn by the patient and by the HCW.
- If needed, you will be placed on home quarantine. WH&S will call you to discuss the exposure, self-monitoring, and how long you need to be quarantined.
- If you do not require home quarantine because your exposure was considered low risk, you will be able to work. WH&S will call you to provide instructions. You will need to self-monitor by checking your temperature twice a day and monitoring for symptoms for 14 days after the last contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient. If you develop symptoms at work then you should immediately put on a mask, self-isolate, and contact WH&S. If you develop symptoms at home, contact WH&S.



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If a HCW is on home quarantine, how should they interact with household members?

- If you are on quarantine and have no symptoms, you may continue to interact with household members.
- As a precaution, you should wash your hands and wipe down surfaces frequently.
- If you do develop symptoms, you should immediately self-isolate (see below).

If on home quarantine, what should HCWs do if they develop fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue or diarrhea?

- Stay home and self-isolate from other household members- preferably in a separate bedroom with door closed and use their own bathroom. This is not always possible in NYC apartments. If a separate room is not available, then keep a 6-foot distance from others and wear a mask.
- Do not share towels, linens, dishes or utensils.
- Wipe surfaces with bleach-containing products.
- Call WH&S (number below) who will decide if testing for COVID-19 is necessary.
- If tested, results take about 24 hours.

If on home quarantine, when can I return to work?

- HCWs cannot return to work until cleared by WH&S, regardless of absence of symptoms or negative COVID testing results. You will not be tested unless you develop symptoms.