Infection Prevention
Quick Guide: COVID-19

HAI&AR Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance Program

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

| COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) is a highly infectious respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The virus primarily spreads through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes. | Point your phone's camera at the QR code for the CDC's COVID-19 infection prevention recommendations. | |

Infection Prevention Checklist

1. **Resident placement and Transmission-Based Precautions**: For resident with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection:
   a. The resident must be _isolated_ in their room with the door closed.
      1) Follow CDC recommendations (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html) for duration of isolation (at least 10 days; depends on illness severity and immunocompromised status).
      2) Restrict residents to their rooms, except for medically necessary care.
   b. Placement in a private room is preferred. If no private rooms exist, group residents with the same illness together, considering the presence of other communicable diseases including multidrug-resistant organisms.
   c. When entering the room, healthcare personnel should wear all recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) during the care of that resident.
      1) PPE includes a NIOSH-approved N95 or equivalent or higher-level respirator, gown, gloves, and eye protection. Discard PPE after each use.
   d. Perform appropriate hand hygiene frequently; use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
   e. Dedicate medical equipment to the resident. All non-dedicated, non-disposable medical equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before use on another resident.

2. **Environmental cleaning and disinfection**: When cleaning resident rooms and common areas, use disinfecting products that are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and are proven to kill COVID-19 (List N): https://cfpub.epa.gov/wizards/disinfectants/.

3. **Communication**: Notify the resident and staff of positive COVID-19 results.
   a) Report to your local health department (https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/) if the facility suspects an outbreak of COVID-19. For more information about outbreak reporting: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/epidemiology/epidemiology-fact-sheets/outbreak-reporting/.
   b) Communicate the resident's COVID-19 status during intra- and inter-facility transfer.

4. **Look for more cases:** Conduct active surveillance to promptly detect new cases in residents or staff.
   a) Follow CDC guidelines for testing residents or staff who are symptomatic, or who have had a close contact/higher risk exposure with someone with SARS-CoV-2.

5. **Employee health**: Staff should report SARS-CoV-2 symptoms or exposure to designated employee health personnel and should not work at any facility when sick.
   a) Healthcare facilities should evaluate VDH recommendations for the management of healthcare personnel (HCP) exposed to or infected with COVID-19 and consider updating their facility's HCP

return to work and management policy: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/3/HCP-Return-to-Work-and-Management-Recommendations-for-COVID-19-and-Influenza.pdf

6. **Source control**: Follow CDC COVID-19 infection prevention recommendations for when source control is recommended, including but not limited to:
   a) For individuals with suspected/confirmed COVID-19
   b) For those with close contact or a higher-risk exposure with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection
   c) For all those all those residing in a unit or area of the facility experiencing an outbreak.

7. **Signage**: To prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is recommended to post signage or visual alerts in the following areas:
   a) At the entrance and other high-traffic areas such as waiting rooms, break rooms, and elevators. These alerts should contain instructions about the current infection prevention and control (IPC) recommendations, including when to use source control and perform hand hygiene.
   b) Transmission-based precautions signage outside of the rooms of residents with suspected/confirmed COVID-19.
   c) Designated cohort zones, if in place (e.g., hot, warm)

COVID-19: How to Share the News

1. To the resident and family members authorized to receive healthcare information: You (or your loved one) have tested positive for COVID-19. Our team has developed a plan for you to keep you safe, and we will be monitoring your symptoms closely to ensure that you receive the best possible care. We will also provide you with any necessary supplies, such as masks, gowns, and gloves, to help prevent the spread of the virus.

2. To healthcare workers: This resident is now positive for COVID-19 and requires Transmission-Based Precautions (TBP). Before entering the resident's room, remember to wear all recommended personal protective equipment (N95 respirator, gown, gloves, eye protection), clean equipment after use, and always do good hand hygiene. Please ensure that the correct TBP signage and dedicated equipment is in place to help keep everyone safe.

Additional Resources

CDC – COVID-19 webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/covid/index.html
- More information on symptoms, testing, treatments and medications, COVID-19 data

VDH – COVID-19 webpage: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/haiar/covid-19/
- More information about educational resources, patient resources, and data and reporting requirements