

Guidance for Healthcare Professionals (HCP) Self-Monitoring and Work Restriction in the Presence of Community Transmission of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

As expected, recent information from the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) indicates that community transmission of COVID-19 is now occurring in San Antonio and Bexar County. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) includes Additional Considerations and Recommendations under these circumstances.

Community transmission of COVID-19 in the United States has been reported in multiple areas. This development means some recommended actions (e.g., contact tracing and risk assessment of all potentially exposed HCP) are impractical for implementation by healthcare facilities. In the setting of community transmission, all HCPs are at some risk for exposure to COVID-19, whether in the workplace or in the community. Devoting resources to contact tracing and retrospective risk assessment could divert resources from other important infection prevention and control activities. The CDC recommends that healthcare facilities shift emphasis to more routine practices, which include asking HCPs to report recognized exposures, regularly monitor themselves for fever and symptoms of infection, and not report to work when ill.

In accordance with these recommendations, the following guidance now applies for all Healthcare Professionals (Staff and Providers):

Healthcare Professionals currently on self-quarantine for COVID-19 exposures may return to work IF asymptomatic.

If you are sick, Stay at Home

If you have new onset of any of the following symptoms, you **MUST** stay at home and immediately notify your supervisor.

- Fever (subjective or temperature of $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 38.0°C)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting

- Muscle aches
- Malaise (feeling tired or run down)

For mild illness consistent with COVID-19, HCPs must stay home for seven (7) days after your symptoms began AND you have been symptom-free for 72 consecutive hours.

You do not require a negative test for COVID-19 to return to work. However, at the completion of isolation, HCPs must be seen by their respective Employee Health Clinic (UHS or UT) to be cleared to return to work.

If your symptoms are severe enough that you need to see a healthcare provider, but it is not an emergency, contact your primary care provider before you seek care. If you must travel to your healthcare provider or are instructed to visit a testing collection site, you should put on a mask, if available, and avoid public transportation.

If you have an emergency, call 911.

All Healthcare Professionals

In the context of community transmission of COVID-19, all HCPs should self-monitor for illness consistent with COVID-19 because all HCPs are at risk for unrecognized exposures. The purpose of self-monitoring is to identify illness early and self-isolate at home to reduce the potential of transmission to all close contacts.

As an HCP, you should self-monitor by taking your temperature twice daily and evaluating yourself for COVID-19 like illness. The timing of these checks should be at least eight (8) hours apart with one check immediately before each work shift. If you have **any** of the following symptoms, **DO NOT** come to work.

- Fever (subjective or temperature of $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 38.0°C)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Muscle aches

- Malaise (feeling tired or run down)

If symptoms develop at work, you should immediately leave the patient care area, don a barrier mask (surgical or procedural), self-isolate, and notify your supervisor.

Healthcare Professionals with exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 person or suspected COVID person (Person Under Investigation-PUI)

If you are an HCP who has a known exposure to a patient or household contact with confirmed COVID-19 or suspected (PUI) COVID-19 individual, you should take extra care to monitor your health, but you may continue to work so long as you are asymptomatic.

There is no requirement for a 14-day quarantine of HCPs with exposure to a known COVID-19 positive person in the setting of community transmission, however, you must wear a barrier mask (surgical or procedural) while at work for 14 days after your exposure.

Returning to work

If you recently had symptoms that required you to stay home, and **did not get tested for COVID-19**, you may return to work seven (7) days after your symptoms began AND you have been symptom-free for 72 consecutive hours.

If you were tested for COVID-19 and the results of that test were **negative**, you may return to work when you have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

If you were tested for COVID-19 and the results of that test were **positive**, you may return to work seven (7) days after your symptoms began AND you have been symptom-free for 72 consecutive hours.