

COVID-19 Update

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020

To: Leaders and physicians at HHS

From: Dr. Dominik Mertz, Medical Director, IPAC

Subject: **COVID-19 testing Update, Asymptomatic/Pre-symptomatic Patients**

HHS continues to refine its clinical practices to respond to the ongoing pandemic. Testing of asymptomatic individuals remains a frequent area of interest from clinical areas. We are expanding testing which is subject to lab capacity that is being called upon heavily.

More testing will help us understand the current prevalence of asymptomatic infection, and guide our isolation practices.

Medical Directive 49006 Collection of Nasopharyngeal Swab for COVID-19 Testing at Hamilton Health Sciences, has been expanded to support asymptomatic testing and there is no physician order required.

Note: In general, **isolation** of patients while waiting for testing results from **asymptomatic patients is not required**.

What is changing

The patient populations below will now be tested :

- A one-time point prevalence testing in patients admitted for 8-14 days.
 - The infection control practitioner will contact each unit to provide more details.
 - This is NOT part of routine testing, and only will be done once for now.
 - Point prevalence testing will start the week of April 20th, HGH on Monday, JH on Tuesday, and MCH/SPH/WLMH on Wednesday.
 - New admits transferred from long-term care facilities and retirement homes regardless of outbreak status at the facility where the patient is from.
 - New admits from outbreak units in acute care facilities.
-

-
- These patients will be placed in droplet contact isolation for 14 days after their transfer from the facility in outbreak.
 - New admits to St. Peter's Hospital including transfers from other HHS sites
 - Prior to bone marrow transplant.
 - Neonates who remain asymptomatic 14 days after recent known exposure to assist in removing isolation/chorting.

Our current testing practice

Currently, testing is done on asymptomatic patients in the following categories:

- Newborns born to COVID-19 positive moms (isolated until NPS result is back)
 - Patients who are about to undergo selected ENT/transnasal neurosurgery/lung surgeries
 - Inpatients admitted for more than 7 days on AGMPs or those who will be undergoing AGMPs.
 - All perioperative patients and those undergoing invasive procedures with anticipated AGMPs are being tested for COVID-19 24-48h before the procedure when feasible.
 - All inpatients on a ward/unit experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak
- NOTE: staff and physicians active on that ward/unit may also be tested.

Dominik
