

COVID-19 Update

Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2020

To: Everyone at HHS

From: Leslie Gauthier, VP, Clinical Support Services and Surgery
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Subject: **Adhering To Physical Distancing and Universal Masking Rules**

Key Messages:

- **Universal masking is now in effect for ALL clinical and non-clinical STAFF AND PHYSICIANS across HHS *hospital/clinical* sites.**
- **Universal masking does NOT replace handwashing and physical distancing which continue to be critical to stop the spread of COVID-19.**
- **It's up to every one of us to protect each other and our patients.**

What's new

The single most common scenario of COVID-19 spread in hospitals is transmission **BETWEEN** health care workers. As HHS, along with other organizations, is asking the community to do their part and respect physical distancing rules, **SO MUST WE.**

Universal masking – Wear the mask!

All staff and physicians must wear a surgical mask as soon as they enter any HHS hospital or clinical site to help address concerns related to physical distancing and help stop the spread of COVID-19.

- Everyone **MUST** don their mask when they enter their site until they leave the building, and only doff it when it cannot be avoided (e.g. meal breaks).

We wear a mask to protect others because we might be spreading COVID-19 without knowing it. It's a clear sign that we respect our colleagues and care for each other's wellbeing and that of our patients.

Physical distancing – Just do it!

It's important to note that the need to keep at least two metres from any other person still applies, but it is even more important when no mask is donned.

There have been too many examples of behaviors across HHS where a high risk of transmission exists between health care workers. **This MUST stop.**

Everyone is reminded to maintain [physical distancing](#):

- During breaks, in break rooms, cafés and cafeterias
- When on a “smoke” break outdoors
- When entering or leaving the building and going through the screening and mask receiving process.

Handwashing – Do it right!

Proper hand hygiene is the best defense against the spread of COVID-19. It is common sense and it works when done right.

There are [simple steps to follow](#). You can learn more [here](#).

We ask everyone to do three things to keep all of us safe: wear the mask, keep apart and wash your hands! Simple but effective barriers to the spread of COVID-19.
