

Memo

TO: St. Joseph Medical Center

FROM: Tim O’Haver, Chief Operating Officer
Ruth Flint, RN, MN, Chief Nursing Officer
Kim Moore, MD, Associate Chief Medical Officer

DATE: October 28, 2020

RE: **COVID-19 Safety Update and Visitor Restriction Changes**

CHI Franciscan is continuing to work with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) to investigate recent cases of COVID-19 at St. Joseph Medical Center. Our priority is taking immediate action to prevent any further spread if cases are confirmed, while working closely with public health and continuing to reduce the risks to our patients and employees.

Testing update and additional safety precautions

To date, around 1,100 employees have been tested out of an abundance of caution and most results have been received. Currently, 10 staff members and 4 patients have tested positive. We are working closely with public health and will follow their guidance regarding ongoing employee testing protocols. All rooms on the impacted floor (seventh floor) have been deep cleaned at this time.

We have also put the following additional safety measures in place within St. Joseph Medical Center:

- Restricting new admissions and visitors to the seventh floor
- Postponing some currently scheduled inpatient procedures if it is medically safe to do so
- Wearing face shields for additional protection
- If face shields cannot be worn, then wear eye protection when in direct patient care
- Using N95s/CAPRs plus eye protection for aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs)
- Discarding all masks at the end of the day, including N95 respirators
- Discarding all previously worn masks and getting a new mask every day
- Reminding team to clean eye protection between each patient room
- Reminding team to replace filter when CAPR light indicates need to change

Changes to visitor restrictions

To further prevent spread of COVID-19, access to the facility will also be limited and controlled as we implement additional hospital visitor restrictions. Please review the attached visitor information for details.

Inpatient elective surgical and procedural cases

To support reserve capacity for the sickest in our community, beginning Monday, Nov. 2, we will postpone inpatient elective surgical and procedural cases where postponement for more than 90 days would, in the judgment of the clinician, not cause harm.

Keeping Employees, Patients and Community Safe

Please continue the following actions at all times:

- **Stay home if you are sick.** Without exception, if you have any symptoms do not come to work:
 - Cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulty, fever 100.0 °F or greater, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
 - Contact your manager and also Employee Health immediately at 253-426-4939. Even if symptoms seem mild, don't ignore them or think it's just fatigue.
- **Closely follow universal masking and PPE requirements:**
 - Continue universal masking and use of eye protection with all patient care and additional PPE when required.
 - Every person, including visitors, must wear a mask at all times in our facilities. If you see someone who is not properly masked, speak up and help ensure compliance.
- **Maintain physical distance** of six feet from others, including while at lunch or during breaks.
- **Practice meticulous hand hygiene.** Wash hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds.

While out in the community:

- Keep a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household, both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- For additional safe practices, please visit the CDC [here](#).

As we face continued community transmission during this global pandemic, we are grateful for the tireless and selfless efforts of all employees to meticulously follow all public health guidelines and provide the safest care possible. Thank you for your dedication in serving our patients and community.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your director, manager or supervisor.

More information

[COVID-19 Intranet Information Center](#) (requires network access)