

Lifespan Physician Group Guideline

SUBJECT: Support Person (visitor) during COVID-19

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DATE: Rev. 9.1.2021 (7.23.20, 10.02.20, 11.10.20, 1.15.21, 3.09.21, 4.30.21, 7.22.21, 8.17.21)

PURPOSE: Due to the initial rapid spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) throughout the U.S. and Rhode Island, visitation restrictions across Lifespan were deemed necessary to protect and maintain the health and safety of our patients and staff. While the number of COVID-19 cases and strain on hospital capacity in Rhode Island has recently decreased, it is evident that COVID-19 will be an endemic disease. This guideline is designed to protect patients and staff during the anticipated long-term presence of COVID-19 through continued reduction of those accompanying patients to ambulatory appointments.

DEFINITION: A support person is any person accompanying the patient to an appointment, test, or procedure. Visitation exceptions and restrictions apply to all employees and staff. If an employee is accompanying a family member or friend who is a patient, the employee is considered a support person.

UNIVERSAL SCREENING:

- Pre-visit confirmation call screenings are encouraged for all patient appointments. If a patient screens positive, they are to be triaged by clinical staff or provider to determine further action steps.
 - Offices should provide instructions regarding visitor restrictions when calling to confirm the appointment.
 - Anyone accompanying a patient must be 18 years of age or older unless the child is the patient.
- All persons meeting criteria for visitation will be screened for symptoms (as directed by Infection Control) and for potential exposure to COVID-19. See screening questions below.
- Must wear a dated screening sticker.
 - GREEN screening sticker for anyone accompanying an outpatient to an appointment, test, procedure, or to the emergency department. Green stickers are only used in the hospitals.
 - RED screening sticker for support person.
 - BLUE screening sticker for patients.

Order stickers through Office Services using the COVID cost center. Indicate the number of each color sticker you are requesting in “Comments/Instructions” box at the end of the form.
<https://intranet.lifespan.org/departments/sites/environmental-central-laundry-and-office-services-rhode-island-hospital/lifespan-office-services-requisition-form>
- Required to wear a Level 2 surgical mask covering nose, mouth, and chin at all times.
 - Anyone wearing a cloth mask, cloth face covering, or any mask with a valve is to be given a Level 2 surgical mask. Ask the person to replace their mask with the Level 2 surgical mask or they may choose to wear the Level 2 surgical mask over their mask/face covering from home.
 - If a person is wearing an N95, they can continue wearing it as follows:
 - If N95 has no valve, it can be worn as is and they do not need a Level 2 surgical mask.
 - If valved, the N95 must be covered with a Level 2 surgical mask.
 - Anyone who fails to agree to wear the surgical mask will be asked to leave.
- Ask support person to perform hand hygiene.
- Those who fail the screening process will not be permitted even if wearing a mask; and will be asked to wait in the car. They may not wait in common areas (lobby, waiting room).
- At the discretion of the provider, the support person can video or audio conference into the appointment discussion to facilitate a safe support person presence during an initial consultation, discussion of a new diagnosis, testing, plan of care, procedure prep, or other sensitive conversation.

GUIDELINE:

- At the discretion of the practice, one support person may be allowed to accompany a patient for outpatient/ambulatory appointments or procedures based on a patient's cognitive impairment, physical limitation, and/or nature of the appointment.
- *Special Circumstances:* In accordance with the civil rights of patients with disabilities, if two support escorts are essential to assist a patient with a disability, including those with an altered mental status, communication barrier, or behavioral concerns (e.g., intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, dementia, and/or behavioral health needs), accommodations will be made to allow 2 people to accompany the patient to the appointment.
- A support person may be asked to leave the practice site to allow for safe distancing if social distancing guidelines are unable to be met.

Approved Support Persons

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Legal guardian.
- Person essential to the care of a patient with a disability, including patients who have altered mental status, communication barriers, or behavioral concerns such as patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, dementia, or behavioral health needs.
- Support person for discussion of a new diagnosis, plan of care, procedure prep, or other sensitive conversation.
- Official service animal allowed.

Food & Beverages

- Food and open beverages are not allowed into the practice for either the patient or the support person unless necessary for a medical condition or test prep, as this requires removal of mask to consume.

Screening Questions

1. Do you have a fever (Temp $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$) or feel feverish, have cold symptoms, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, or GI symptoms (nausea/diarrhea)?
2. Do you have chills, headache, or muscle pain?
3. Do you have a loss of smell, reduced ability to smell or detect odors, or a reduced or distorted sense of taste?
4. Have you been diagnosed as COVID-19 positive in the last 10 days or awaiting COVID-19 test results for symptoms, or removal of quarantine related to travel or exposure?
Whether or not they are vaccinated, if they answer yes to any of the first 4 questions, they are not allowed in. Note: there may be rare exceptions where a symptomatic parent/guardian or caregiver of a pediatric patient may be allowed.
5. Have you tested positive within the last 90 days?
If they respond yes, they are not allowed in unless they have completed the isolation period.
Successful completion of isolation period means that they did the following:
 - Stayed home (did not go to work or school) for at least 10 days.
 - If had symptoms, stayed home for at least 10 days since started having symptoms.
 - If did not have symptoms, stayed home for at least 10 days from the day tested.
 - Those with a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) isolated for 20 days if an extended isolation period was recommended by their healthcare provider.
6. Have you had close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
Close contact/exposure is defined as someone who has been within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hr period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes in one day).
If they respond yes, they are not allowed in unless they:
 1. Have quarantined for 10 days from last day of exposure,

OR

2. Have quarantined for 7 days from last day of exposure with proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken at least 5 days after exposure,

OR

3. Have completed COVID-19 vaccination and received their final dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before exposure and are asymptomatic. Individuals may self-attest to completed vaccination.

7. Have you traveled in the past 14 days? *

Domestic Travel

Individuals traveling to RI from a location within the United States (US) or US territories, are **no longer required to quarantine or get tested upon arrival whether or not they are vaccinated.***

International Travel

Patients traveling to RI from a location outside the US or US territories, are **no longer required to quarantine or get tested upon arrival whether or not they are vaccinated.***

*To lower the chances of catching and spreading COVID-19, the RIDOH **recommends** all travelers follow the quarantine and testing guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

NOT Fully Vaccinated – Domestic and International Travelers

- Should get tested with a viral COVID-19 test 3-5 days after travel and quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.
 - Even if result is negative, quarantine for 7 days.
 - If result is positive, quarantine as follows:
 - If have symptoms, isolate for at least 10 days since day symptoms started.
 - If do not have symptoms, isolate for at least 10 days from the day tested.
 - If immunocompromised, may need to isolate for 20 days per guidance of healthcare provider.
 - If do not get tested, quarantine for 10 days after travel.

FULLY Vaccinated – Domestic Travelers**

- Do not need to get tested or quarantine after arrival in RI.

FULLY Vaccinated – International Travelers**

- Should get tested with a viral COVID-19 test 3-5 days after travel.
 - If result is positive, quarantine as follows:
 - If have symptoms, isolate for at least 10 days since day symptoms started.
 - If do not have symptoms, isolate for at least 10 days from the day tested.
 - If immunocompromised, may need to isolate for 20 days per guidance of healthcare provider.

** Fully vaccinated means received all recommended doses of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by the US FDA or World Health Organization (WHO) and more than 14 days have passed since the final dose.

Anyone routinely tested for work or school is not considered a PUI, unless they screen positive.

Interpreters & Vendors

- Treat as a visitor and follow above guidelines.

Residents & Students

- Residents are considered Lifespan employees. They are aware, and should be reminded on their first day, that by coming to work they are agreeing to the employee attestation statement.
- Medical students: The person in charge of the student during a rotation reviews the self-screening policy on the first day of the rotation.