

Ambulatory Patient/Caregiver/Visitor Screening Process

COVID Planning Council

July 13, 2020

Definitions:

- **Patient:** A person who is receiving care.
- **Caregiver/Support Person:** An individual who is accompanying a patient into a facility for care. Example: Mother bringing a child to the clinic for care.
- **Visitor:** An individual coming into a facility to visit a patient who is being seen or admitted, i.e. child of the patient, other family member, friend.
- **Clinical Facility:** A place where patient care is provided, i.e. hospital, off-campus emergency department, urgent care, ambulatory clinic.
- **Positive Screening:**
 - Temperature of 100.4 F (38.0 C) or more. For those aged ≥ 65 , any temp 99.6 F (37.6 C) or more.
 - One or more of the following symptoms: Fever or chills, Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle or body aches, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or vomiting, Diarrhea
 - Close contact with a confirmed case within the last 14 days

Clinic Entrance Process:

- **Patient/Caregiver/Visitor (PCV) enters the building:**
 - **Stand Alone Clinic:** PCV is screened for symptoms and fever by receptionist.
 - **Clinic within a Medical Office Building:** PCV may enter building with face covering and is screened by receptionist of the clinic they are being seen in.
 - **Clinic within a Hospital:** PCV are screened by screener upon entry to the hospital.
- **Screener responsibilities:**
 - Takes temperature of all PCV
 - Asks questions about symptoms and exposure risk
 - Offers mask to all PCV, over 2 years of age, if they do not have a face covering
 - Encourages hand hygiene before sitting in waiting area
 - Report positive screening to back office medical staff immediately
 - Disinfect surfaces touched by patient during check in, i.e. pens, clip boards, etc.
- **Back office medical staff responsibilities:**
 - Provide guidance to visitors with positive screening, i.e. advise to mask and isolate, direct to primary care provider or urgent care for evaluation as needed
 - Escort patient and/or caregiver with positive screening to an exam room immediately to isolate from the public waiting area

Clinic Waiting Area Guidelines:

- Set up waiting rooms to facilitate six-foot social distance. If possible, consider rooming patients from cars, space out appointments and separate well visits from sick visits.

- Determine maximum capacity based on the size of the waiting area, 1 person per 36 square feet of space:
 - Example: 300 square foot waiting area = maximum 8-person capacity.
- Remove and disperse chairs to promote social distancing.
- Post signs that encourage frequent hand hygiene, avoid touching face and practicing cough etiquette.
- Provide waterless hand sanitizer, facial tissue and waste baskets for disposal.
- Develop routine for disinfection of horizontal surfaces throughout clinic day.
 - Example: 10:00am, 1:00pm, 4:00pm and as needed if contaminated.

FAQ:

1. **What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should front desk staff be using?** Procedure mask and eye protection if plexi-glass barrier is not available.
2. **What type of mask should be offered to PCV's upon entry to the clinic?**
 - Symptomatic patients and caregivers will be provided a procedure mask to replace a cloth face covering or if they do not have a face covering.
 - Asymptomatic PVC will be provided a procedure, cloth or blue wrap mask if they do not have one.
3. **Can symptomatic visitors be allowed to enter a facility?** Adult friends or family members should be masked and asked to wait outside the clinic. Children should be masked and the patient/visitor isolated to an exam room immediately.
4. **Can a symptomatic caregiver be allowed to enter a facility?** Yes, they must use a procedure mask and if possible isolated with the patient in an exam room immediately.
5. **Do children need to wear a mask?** Per CDC guidelines, all children over the age of two should be masked.
6. **Can asymptomatic PCV wear a cloth face covering?** Yes

Resources:

- [MultiCare COVID-19 resource page](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 symptoms printable with pictures, choose a language](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 printable poster link](#)
- [Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department COVID-19 poster](#)