COVID-19: Answers to frequently asked questions

April 7, 2020

IU Health continues to monitor the novel coronavirus outbreak and is coordinating directly with the Indiana State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Here are answers to frequently asked questions.

Please select a topic to view related FAQs*:

- General
- Talking with team members, patients and others
- Clinical/Infection prevention protocols
- IU Health work arrangements, travel and more
- IU Health visitor restrictions

- Patient Privacy and HIPAA
- Business travel and expense reimbursement

- Virtual screening clinic - General
- Virtual screening and testing for team members
- Submit your questions

*While every effort is made to keep this page current with the latest news and guidance, due to the fast changing nature of the coronavirus pandemic, there may be a delay between announcements and updates to this page. For the latest breaking news, team members should, visit the IU Health Coronavirus portal page.

General

What is the 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China. On January 31, WHO declared a global health emergency, and on March 11, declared the coronavirus outbreak to be a global pandemic.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for the latest situation summary update.

Is COVID-19 the same as the SARS virus or MERS?

No. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals, including camels, cats and bats. The recently emerged COVID-19 is not the same as the coronavirus that causes Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) or the coronavirus that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). However, genetic analyses suggest this

virus emerged from a virus related to SARS. There are ongoing investigations to learn more. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?
People who are infected with COVID-19 have developed mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath, pneumonia and potentially respiratory distress. There are many types of illnesses that can cause these types of respiratory symptoms. The CDC recommends that individuals with these symptoms who have traveled to Europe, China, Italy, Iran, South Korea, Japan, United Kingdom, Ireland (or other locations that are designated as Level 2 or 3 alert by the CDC) or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 should be evaluated.

Does COVID-19 spread from person to person?
The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading from person to person. Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why the CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

How is COVID-19 diagnosed?
Diagnosis occurs through laboratory testing of respiratory specimens and serum (blood). Some coronavirus strains cause the common cold and patients tested by their health care provider may test positive for these types. The COVID-19 strain can only be detected at a public health laboratory at this time.

Can I still travel to countries where COVID-19 cases have occurred?
For general travel related questions please refer to the CDC's FAQs for Travelers. Updated IU Health guidelines for team members, volunteers, students, contractors and more are available, but note that these may continue to evolve as the situation progresses.Always check the IU Health Coronavirus portal page for breaking news and updates.

How can I protect myself and my family from getting COVID-19?
There is currently no vaccine to prevent the virus, so the best way to prevent the illness is to avoid exposure and use every day preventative actions as well as these steps provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The World Health Organization (WHO) also recommends the following measures to prevent the spread of illness:

1. Avoid close contact with sick people
2. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water (or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content) for a minimum of 20 seconds
3. Keep a distance of at least six (6) feet between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing
4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
5. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing (e.g. use a tissue that you then immediately throw away or cough into your elbow)
6. Clean and disinfect commonly used items and high-touch surfaces (e.g. counters, doorknobs, phones, keyboards, toilets, etc) every day
7. Stay home if you are not feeling well
8. Keep up to date on the latest information from reputable resources like the WHO, CDC or the Indiana State Department of Health
9. If you take public transportation, use these guidelines from Business Insider

If these measures seem familiar it's because they are similar to the same precautions you should take to reduce your risk of becoming sick with the flu.

What is considered to be "close contact"?
Close contact would be in the presence of an infected person for 10 minutes or more and within 6 feet of that person.

Should I wear a mask for extra protection?
There is currently no recommendation or evidence that wearing a mask will protect you from this infection. If you are already infected, wearing a facemask may protect those around you.

Is there a vaccine?
Currently, there is not a vaccine for COVID-19.

What are the treatments for COVID-19?
Currently, there are no specific treatments recommended for illnesses caused by COVID-19. Medical care is supportive to help relieve symptoms.

What should I do if I have a close contact with someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19?
You should call your primary care physician or your local health department for guidance. IU Health also provides free screening for COVID-19 via our virtual visits app. You should not try to seek medical care by going to doctor's offices or the ER unless it is emergently necessary. You should avoid gatherings and talk to your supervisor before returning to work.

What should I do if I have a close contact with someone who was sick?
There are many different respiratory infections that circulate throughout the year. Most of them do not have medications to prevent you from getting sick after an exposure. In general, you should monitor for the development of symptoms and should call and discuss these symptoms with your doctor if you

have concerns or you have a consistently high fever. If symptoms of upper respiratory infection develop (fever, cough, sputum production, runny nose, etc.), you should attempt to avoid exposing other people and stay home from work until you feel better and are no longer having fevers.

When should I see a doctor for COVID-19?
If you are experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) and have possibly been exposed to the virus, you should contact your healthcare provider or use the IU Health free screening for COVID-19 via our virtual visits app. The virtual visits team will recommend and facilitate appropriate pathways for care and will provide direct access and communication with local hospitals as medically appropriate.

If you choose to go to your provider, make sure to call ahead, and let your provider know if you've recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread and which symptoms you have developed.

Will I be tested if I have symptoms?
Currently, tests are limited to those individuals who have fever and cough with recent travel to a country outside the US with high COVID-19 rates or exposure to someone who has COVID-19. We may be testing more patients as the laboratory test becomes available locally. These guidelines may change and it is important to speak to your doctor or health department about whom we are still testing.

How do we test a patient for COVID-19?
Current guidelines are to take swab of your nose. Occasionally there may be a blood draw as well. The test needs to be performed in a monitored setting in a special patient room to assure we don't infect any healthcare workers. If you are told by your doctor that you need to be tested, please do not show up at clinics or emergency rooms without letting them know you are coming. You should wear a mask when you enter the hospital and before you get to your testing room.

Can a test start out as negative and change to positive later?
Early in the course of the infection the test for COVID-19 may be a false negative. If tested when you are symptomatic, the test should be more reliable. This is why we are only recommending testing symptomatic patients.

What should I do if I have been diagnosed with COVID-19?
If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, your healthcare provider will provide you with specific guidance for your situation. Generally, people who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness. This means that you should restrict activities outside your home, except for

medical care. Do not go to work, school or public areas, and avoid public transportation, ride sharing or taxis while sick.

Stay away from others as much as possible, including in your home.Try to stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Avoid sharing personal household items, and wash items thoroughly after use with soap and water.

View a full list of steps to take when you are sick from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

If I am infected with the coronavirus, what are the chances of being re-infected with it a second time? If you can become re-infected, would it be more or less severe in the second instance?
While there is still much to learn about this virus, generally, reinfection seems highly unlikely. If anyone were to get COVID-19 a second time, it would likely be those who are higher risk—older individuals with chronic conditions—but recurrence is rare.

Is COVID-19 fatal?
At this point, the mortality rate with this viral infection seems low. Elderly patients seem to have more severe disease, children seem to have little or no symptoms. Patients with other chronic medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease, and kidney disease seem to have higher risk of mortality than other patients, but if patients with these infections become sick, it doesn't necessarily mean they will die or even develop symptoms.

How can I find out more information?
It's best to use only reliable sources when looking for the latest information on COVID-19. IU Health has several resources available for team members, patients and the general public. Good resources include:

- **For general public:** CDC website
- **For patients and the general public:** IU Health resource page
- **For parents:** Riley resource page for parents
- **For team members (internal only):** Coronavirus Update portal page
- **For clinicians (internal only):** IU Health Infection Prevention Intake Screening page

---

Talking with team members, patients and others

With so much going on, and things happening so quickly, how can we be sure we are doing what is best for our patients and team members?
When the novel coronavirus crisis began, IU Health developed a set of goals to guide our actions,

and since then, every decision IU Health has made has been in direct support of one or more of these priorities.

In order to care for our patients and promote public health, our goals are:

1) Mitigate the spread of COVID-19,
2) Enable our workforce and create a safe environment for our team,
3) Be good stewards of scarce resources, and
4) Be a trusted source of information.

What are our team members telling us about how they feel at this time?
Our team are committed to providing the very best care to patients and one another. So far, our team members have told us:

- They will do whatever it takes to provide excellent, compassionate care to our patients
- They appreciate the amped up level of team work across the System
- They know that IU Health leaders are working diligently to protect us and our patients, and to communicate daily updates and changes in protocols
- They are worried about getting the virus, as well as spreading it
- They are sometimes confused about the frequently changing protocols around the virus

It's understandable that team members may feel overwhelmed with the pace of change required to address the needs of an evolving pandemic. We also know they are worried about their safety, as well as the safety of their families and patients. Providing a safe working environment for all is a priority.

IU Health will continue to evaluate the measures we are taking, and provide daily updates to team member via the Daily newsletter. This way you will know what to expect and prepare for, and how best protect yourselves and others as the situation progresses.

What are our patients telling us about how they feel at this time?
It's reasonable to expect that our patients are feeling isolated, lonely and fearful in light of our current visitor restrictions. When we look at real-time patient feedback, we see the following themes:

- Patients are comforted to see strong measures in place for cleanliness and screening individuals
- Patients may not understand why they are not being tested when they feel they have symptoms
- Patients assume there are delays in receiving test results due to virus
- Patients believe they may be avoided by team members who suspect the patient could have virus
- Patients are concerned that they cannot receive the care they want at offices due to the virus

Patients are pleased with virtual visits and personal calls from their providers

Is it safe to visit my family member/friend/colleague at an IU Health facility?
IU Health has enacted visitors restrictions to keep our team members, patients and their guests safe. All visitors will be screened See the latest restrictions here.

How can I keep my child informed without causing undue concern?
When discussing COVID-19 with your kids, it's best to tailor your message depending on their age group. For school-aged children and teenagers, it's ok to describe to them what the virus is, how it's spread and how they can protect themselves from getting it. Older kids may want to wear a mask. Using masks are ineffective in preventing yourself from getting COVID-19 and other similar respiratory viruses. You should only wear a mask if you have symptoms.

For younger preschool-aged kids, you don't need to go into as much detail and should focus on how they can protect themselves – by washing their hands. Proper handwashing for at least 20 seconds will help lower the chances of you or your child getting not only COVID-19 but other illnesses as well such as the seasonal flu. If you need help knowing how long 20 seconds is, it's about as long as singing the ABCs or humming 'Happy Birthday' from beginning to end twice.

Can I continue with my normal routine?
Many activities have been cancelled or postponed, and many cities or states have instituted additional guidance and restrictions. Check your local news sites for updates, and if you must go out in public, individuals are encouraged to exercise an abundance of caution and good judgment to best protect themselves and their loved ones.

What should I do about our family travel plans?
It's important to stay update on any national and local travel restrictions. Check the CDC website and your local government page for additional details.

If my child has a chronic condition, do I need to worry more?
Practicing proper handwashing and sanitizing potentially contaminated surfaces or toys are the necessary prevention methods for COVID-19. Consulting with your child's specialist is the right thing to do if you have questions. If you have to leave a voicemail when calling and wait for a return call, please be patient and remember that others are likely calling too.

If my child is showing symptoms, what should I do?
If you suspect that you or your child may have COVID-19, the best thing to do is to call your primary care physician or local health department for steps on what to do next. IU Health is also offering free virtual screenings that can help assess symptoms and the best clinical pathway you should take.

When should I go to the Emergency Department?
Dr. John Christenson, a Pediatric Infectious Disease specialist with the Ryan White Center for Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Global Health tells parents whose children were otherwise healthy before their symptoms appeared to not take them to the Emergency Room. If they don't have the

virus, you're potentially exposing them and you to other illnesses such as the flu. If your child does end up testing positive for the virus, then you're exposing others.

However, if your child is experiencing high fevers that are difficult to control with acetaminophen (Tylenol) and/or ibuprofen (Advil), you should call their primary care provider immediately. **Any time your child is having difficulty breathing, vomiting, not keeping down fluids or has a temperature above 104 degrees, it is time to seek help and visit your nearest Emergency Room.** The health care team will decide if your child needs to be tested for COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses.

If someone wants to make a donation of money, food or medical supplies, or if they have excess medical equipment and supplies they'd like to sell to IU Health, who should they contact?
IU Health is grateful for the outpouring of support and has established a single website to manage all offers of help. Donations and supplies, including food, money and medical equipment, should be directed to: https://iuhealthfoundation.org/COVID19. A donor submits their offer, and then IU Health will evaluate and respond. Organizations that have medical supplies they'd like to sell to IU Health should also be directed to that page to submit the "supplier" form.

How can I find out more information?
It's best to use only reliable sources when looking for the latest information on COVID-19. IU Health has several resources available for team members, patients and the general public. Good resources include:

- **For general public:** CDC website
- **Forpatients and the general public:** IU Health resource page
- **For parents:** Riley resource page for parents

Clinical/Infection prevention protocols

How can I find out about the latest IU Health clinical updates and procedures?
The IU Health Infection Prevention page is the single source of information for clinicians regarding the Coronavirus. It contains all the latest news and information for clinical team members, as well as a toolkit, detailed instructions on using personal protection equipment, clinical summaries and more.

What should I do if I do not have a N95 mask or PAPR?
Ideally the patient is placed in a negative airflow room the care team will be using a N95 mask. However, we recognize that we care for patients in several different environments. In the event that a negative airflow room and/or N95 mask is not available an alternative is to mask the patient and the team member both utilizing the yellow isolation mask.

Is IU Health able to test for COVID-19?
Yes. The IU Health Molecular Diagnostics Lab launched internal testing for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)

in mid-March. This is an important milestone, as it accelerates our ability to identify exposed COVID-19 patients and team members, provide appropriate care and isolation measures, protect those in our facilities, and manage our personal protective equipment.

Initially, the number of people who can be tested is limited, with priority given to high-risk, seriously ill patients and health care workers who may have been exposed to the virus. IU Health testing is not currently available to all team members or the general public.

What if I receive a report that Coronavirus was detected by our laboratory on a respiratory specimen?
Our laboratory is able to detect Coronaviruses typically associated with mild illnesses such as the common cold. These viruses are not the same as the 2019-Novel Coronavirus associated with the current outbreak and therefore results showing detection of Coronavirus by our laboratory should not raise any additional concern.

I have a clinical question that's not answered here. Who do I go to for help?
If you have a question that is not covered in the resources or need further information please speak to your manager. If your leadership can not answer your questions, please e-mail: infectionprevention@iuhealth.org.

IU Health Policies (including work arrangements, travel and more)

How do I handle schedule concerns due to coronavirus, school closings, etc.?
Team members should work with their leaders on the following steps:

1. See if the team member can work alternate shifts or schedule other accommodations;
2. If not available, the team member could work from home if the job permits;
3. If unable to work from home, the team member may use PTO;
4. If the team member has no PTO balance, they may take unpaid time.

   This applies to the following scenarios:
   - Personal illness (If a team member is sick, they should stay home)
   - 14-day quarantine/absence if you have a household member with a confirmed case of COVID-19
   - 14-day quarantine/absence if you or your household member was exposed to a known COVID-19 case (team members should contact the Virtual Coronavirus Screening Clinic as soon as possible for screening to determine next steps)

I'm on corrective action, and normally can't work from home. Is that an issue now?
No – those are not restrictions we are using at this time. A person on corrective action can be a candidate for working from home if the job is amenable to that kind of arrangement. Team members on corrective action should speak to their managers about the feasibility of a work-from-home arrangement.

My work team is still holding in person meetings. Should we continue?
IU Health has the following guidance for internal on-site meetings: only do so when it is 1) business-essential, 2) time sensitive, 3) there is no reasonable virtual alternative, and 4) social distancing is possible (separation of six feet among participants).

I'm a manager and have candidates scheduled for job interviews. Should they come in for a face-to-face interview and shadowing?
Job interviewing should continue as IU Health has a business need to fill open jobs. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we recommend hiring leaders refrain from conducting live interviews and shadowing as much as possible. Instead, we recommend using any of the following technologies whenever possible (we are not prescribing one solution because in each case we want to be sensitive to what is most convenient for the candidate and interviewer):

- Facetime
- Microsoft Teams
- Webex meeting
- Skype: https://www.skype.com/en/ (this may require installation on your computer by the Help Desk)
- Zoom

See your Talent Acquisition Consultant for more assistance. Here are some additional tools to help: https://team.myiuhealth.org/work-toolbox/team-management/recruitment-hiring.

If a team member is required to work with confirmed COVID-19 patients do they receive hazard pay?
Team members working with COVID-19 patients will not receive hazard pay.

If a team member is exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 patient while at work and they are sent home to be quarantined, will they be paid?
Yes. Team members who are instructed by the Virtual Screening Clinic to quarantine due to workplace exposure will be paid for their quarantine period based on their regularly scheduled hours/wages.

Will we continue to host New Team Member Orientation?
IU Health will modify our day one orientation plans for new hires starting on or after March 23, until further notice. Starting March 23, new hires statewide will receive day one orientation content in an online virtual format. Team members are encouraged to complete this virtual orientation from home, but if that is not an option, arrangements can be made to complete it at a designated location in their work region on their first day. **We ask that hiring leaders reach out directly to their new hires at least five days prior to their start date, with information about where to go on their first day and the rest of week one.** The Learning Institute is partnering with clinical educators to determine how CORE orientation will be handled for some of our clinical team members. Once this information is finalized it will be available on the portal: https://team.myiuhealth.org/work-toolbox/team-management/recruitment-hiring.

Are we allowing students to be present in our facilities during this COVID-19 situation?
Yes, with restrictions. Due to the need to conserve personal protective equipment (PPE) and ensure the safety of our patients, team members and learners, beginning immediately, we will not allow ANY students/learners to participate in ANY procedures in which PPE is used – such as the operating room, endoscopy, cath lab, etc. This applies to any of our students (medical, nursing, dental, allied health, etc.) and all areas (outpatient and inpatient, hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, clinics).

We will also limit the number of individuals caring for patients in isolation for ANY reason (not just COVID-19 patients) to essential members of the team. This applies to all forms of clinicians, caregivers and learners (including residents and caregivers). This will help us continue to conserve PPE over the long-term.

For now, students are permitted to perform their clinical rotations as part of their educational program, those these may pause at a later date. Informal/unofficial shadowing or observing is discontinued, though shadowing/observation that is part of a clinical experience is allowed.

I am an IUSM resident returning from international travel. What do I need to do?
Alert Sarah Wingfield (swingfie@iu.edu) in the Dean's office at IUSM as soon as possible.

Visitor restrictions

Why are we restricting visitors in all IU Health facilities?
As more cases are identified in Indiana, it's important IU Health has a single, consistent approach in how we treat and screens patients and visitors, in order to show we are extending the same safety precautions to all patients in our care, regardless of where they are. System leaders have agreed to institute a consistent screening process and set of visitor protocols.

What are the restrictions?
Yes. Full details on visitor restrictions are available here.

How should visitors enter the hospitals?
All visitors, including patients, will be allowed to enter via a single, main entrance for each hospital, and will be screened for potential illness upon entry.

Can patients have different designated visitors each day?
Full details on visitor restrictions are available here.

How long will there be visitor restrictions?
That is yet to be determined. New information is available on a daily basis, and IU Health will monitor the situation closely and make changes as necessary.

What should be done if a potential visitor answers yes to any of the screening questions?
If a potential visitor answers yes to any of the screening questions, advise them to call their primary care provider or contact the IU Health Coronavirus Screening Clinic (Instructions for downloading and using the app). The visitor may not go visit a patient. They should only enter the building if seeking emergent care.

Do the screeners need to take the visitor's temperature?
No. Currently, only ask about symptoms.

Can visitors go to other places in the hospital (chapel, cafeteria, etc.)?
Due to the enhanced visitor restrictions, only select visitor are allowed in the hospital. These visitors should only spend time in the patient room and should leave once the visit is over. Visitors should complete hand hygiene upon entering or leaving the patient room. Full details on visitor restrictions are available here.

Patient Privacy and HIPAA

Students, Schools and Universities
A student of a local university/college is being treated in an IU Health Emergency Department and has tested positive for COVID-19. Does IU Health notify the university/college?
No, IU Health should follow protocols for reporting to public health authorities (e.g. local Health Department, Indiana State Department of Health, CDC) who will in turn make any necessary notifications to the university/college. The public health authorities will be our voice to the public while we continue to maintain patient confidentiality. IU Health may disclose protected health information (PHI) to public health authorities as necessary for the public health authorities to carry out their mission of preventing or controlling disease.

Employers
A workforce member of a large manufacturing plant is being treated in an IU Primary Care Clinic and has tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Does IU Health notify the patient's employer?
No, IU Health should follow protocols for reporting to public health authorities (e.g. local Health Department, Indiana State Department of Health, CDC) who will in turn make any necessary notifications to the employer. The public health authorities will be our voice to the public while we continue to maintain patient confidentiality. IU Health may disclose protected health information (PHI) to public health authorities as necessary for the public health authorities to carry out their mission of preventing or controlling disease.

Patients

An IU Health employee who delivers direct patient care has tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Does IU Health notify all the patients that the employee treated?

No, IU Health should follow protocols for reporting to public health authorities (e.g. local Health Department, Indiana State Department of Health, CDC) who will in turn make any necessary notifications to the patients. IU Health may provide patient lists and patient contact information to public health authorities as necessary for the public health authorities to contact the patients for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease.

- In addition to following protocols for notification to public health authorities, on rare instances notification by IU Health "to prevent a serious and imminent threat" directly to a patient may occur, which is fact dependent on a case-by-case basis (e.g. if an elderly and severely compromised patient is treated by a positive COVID-19 (Coronavirus) employee and the public health authority cannot promptly notify the patient, then a determination may be made within our professional judgment for IU Health to directly notify the patient of potential COVID-19 (Coronavirus) exposure if necessary "to prevent a serious and imminent threat")

Work Note

An IU Health minor patient has tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The parent of the minor patient has requested a work note to provide to his employer so that the parent can care for and quarantine with the child at home. What can IU Health do?

Upon request, IU Health should follow routine procedures and provide the patient or Authorized Representative of a patient (e.g. here, the parent is the Authorized Representative of the minor child) with documentation to excuse the child from School/Other Activities. The parent may then opt to present the documentation to the parent's employer. If additional or more formal information is requested, then follow routine record release procedures by having the patient or Authorized Representative sign an Authorization to Release and Disclosure Patient Information form to be processed by Health Information Management or IU Health's medical records release vendor, Ciox.

Minor Child Tested Positive

An IU Health minor patient has tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The mother of the minor patient has requested IU Health to provide no health information to the minor patient's father. What can IU Health do?

Upon request, IU Health should follow routine release procedures and is permitted to provide protected health information (PHI) to a parent of a minor child as long as there is not a Court Order to the contrary expressly prohibiting the parent from having access the minor child's health information. Even if one parent has sole custody, as long as there is not a Court Order expressly restricting the sharing of health information about a minor child to a parent, the non-custodial parent is entitled access to their minor child's PHI.

Concern Inquiries

A caller to an IU Health Primary Care Clinic stated he was in the Clinic yesterday and is now concerned that he may have been exposed to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus). What information does IU Health provide the caller?

IU Health should follow routine procedures for maintaining patient confidentiality. IU Health should reassure the caller that IU Health is taking all appropriate safety precautions recommended by the CDC and is working closely with public health authorities (e.g. local Health Department, Indiana State Department of Health, CDC). While exposure may occur in any public setting, the risk is currently very low.

Education – Social Media

IU Health is an academic health center closely aligned with the IU School of Medicine. Can a learner or faculty member de-identify protected health information (PHI) of an IU Health patient that has tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus) by removal of the 18 identifiers listed in the De-Identification of Protected Health Information Policy and place the information externally on social media platforms for educational purposes?

No, IU Health should follow routine procedures for maintaining patient confidentiality. Even if the 18 identifiers can be removed from the PHI, if any IU Health patient information posted externally on social media sites could be used to identify a patient, then it is a violation of HIPAA. We are in a fluid situation with extensive media coverage and the state-wide numbers are too low for external education without a signed patient consent as it could be used to identify a patient.

Team Members: Receiving COVID-19 Treatment from IU Health

I am on the care team treating my co-worker for COVID-19 within an IU Health facility. Can I tell my manager and other co-workers about this?

No, IU Health should follow routine procedures for maintaining patient confidentiality. Team members are entitled to the same privacy protections as any other patient receiving care in our facilities. If a team member is receiving treatment from IU Health, we will continue to extend patient confidentiality protections. We will also comply with our reporting obligations to public health authorities (e.g. local Health Department, Indiana State Department of Health, CDC) and as required by law for public health activities under OSHA.

Team Members: HIPAA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

If I am exposed to COVID-19 while working at IU Health, what happens to my work-related exposure information?

OSHA regulates workplace safety and requires all employers to track work-related injuries, illnesses and exposures. When IU Health provides work-related exposure testing at the request of an employer as part of the employer's OSHA exposure plan required by law, HIPAA allows disclosure of the employee's test result in relation to a work-related exposure to the employer so that the employer can carry out its OSHA responsibilities for workplace surveillance; therefore, while the tracking of work-related exposures has always been the case, it may feel more prevalent during this unprecedented, nation-wide public health emergency. Work-related exposure data is kept confidential and only accessed by those who need to know as part of the employer's OSHA exposure plan. The COVID-19 status of any team member, including while following routine OSHA required procedures, should not

be publicly disclosed in any public forums as we continue our on-going efforts to ensure a safe environment for our workforce.

Team Members: Protecting Covid-19 Statuses of Team Members and Patients

Q: Will team members be notified of Covid-19 positive patients or Covid-19 positive team members with whom they may interact within their Hospital Units, Physician Clinic, Pharmacy or other health care settings?

A: Due to widespread presence of COVID-19 in our community, exposure can occur not only from our patients, but also from our neighbors, family members, team members and fellow Hoosiers. Out of respect for the privacy of our patients and ensuring continued compliance with HIPAA, we will **not** disclose patients' COVID-19 statuses unless necessary for clinical care or as required for reporting to the Indiana State Department of Health. Out of respect for the privacy of our team members, we will also **not** disclose their COVID-19 statuses.

Screening at Limited Access Points: Exercising HIPAA Reasonable Safeguards to Protect PHI

Q: Patients presenting for outpatient services (like therapy) are stopped at the door to be screened and asked to report their reason for presenting. Is it a HIPAA violation to ask them why they are here?

A: No, we are exercising reasonable safeguards by doing as much as possible to avoid other people overhearing the inquiry, it is not a HIPAA violation. If others happen to hear what is said it is an incidental disclosure during a legitimate process to mitigate spread and ensure a safe environment for our workforce and patients.

Patients: COVID-19 Patients Discharged to Facilities (Treatment) or to Home (HIPAA Friends & Family Exception Involved in Patient's Care)

Q: When a COVID-19 positive patient is being discharged to a nursing home or to home, is it okay to inform and include the positive results in the discharge paperwork that the nursing home or family receives for continuity of care?

A: Yes, if the positive results need to be relayed to the nursing home for continuity of care, as part of treatment of the patient, then it is appropriate to include the positive COVID-19 results as part of the discharge instructions for the patient. Additionally, HIPAA allows health care providers to disclose protected health information (PHI) to family, friends and others involved in an individual's care. Generally, verbal permission from the patient should be obtained. If verbal permission is unable to be obtained from a patient due to incapacity or unavailability, the minimum necessary information should only be shared if in the provider's professional judgment it is in that patient's best interest to do so to with the friend or family member involved in the patient's care.

First Responders: Prevent or Lessen a Serious or Imminent Threat / Minimum Necessary

Q: When can protected health information (PHI) be shared with first responders during the COVID-19 public health emergency?

A: HIPAA permits disclosure of protected health information (PHI) about individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 to law enforcement, paramedics, fire department personnel, first responders, child welfare workers, mental health crisis services personnel, or others charged with protecting the health or safety of the public if the health care provider believes in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or minimize the threat of imminent exposure to such personnel in the discharge of their duties. A health care provider must make reasonable efforts to limit the information used or disclosed under this exception to that which is the "minimum necessary" to accomplish the purpose for the disclosure.

Otherwise Required or Permitted by Law

Q: Are there other situations when disclosure of protected health information (PHI) is required or permitted by law?

A: Yes, a health care provider may disclose PHI about an individual when required or permitted by law. This guidance is intended to cover those frequently asked questions but is not exhaustive. For additional support, please review the HIPAA privacy and security policies located on the team member portal, visit the HIPAA Privacy Resources and Guidance page on the team member portal or contact the Privacy Officer directly at HIPAA@iuhealth.org.

Have additional questions?

Contact the IU Health Privacy Office at HIPAA@IUHealth.org or 317.963.1940.

Business travel and expense reimbursement

I have an upcoming business trip planned, can I still go?

Team members may not travel out-of-state for business at this time. The travel restriction, which supersedes the original 45-day travel restriction, will remain in place until lifted.

Can I attend a conference in Indiana?

Team members who travel for conferences and seminars within the state are strongly recommend to do so only when 1) it is business-essential, 2) it is time sensitive, 3) there is no reasonable virtual alternative, and 4) social distancing (separation of six feet among participants) is possible.

I booked a work trip through Egencia. With the travel restrictions in place, what do I need to do to cancel my trip?

For air, hotel, and rental car reservations made in Egencia no action is required from the team member at this time. Reservations for out-of-state travel made through Egencia will be cancelled centrally. For cancelled flights within Egencia, a ticket voucher will be issued for future use. Because of airline security requirements, only the traveler specifically named in the original booking can reuse vouchers. Team members will need to cancel any conference registrations.

I booked travel outside of Egencia. Do I need to do anything?
Yes. Accounts Payable only has visibility to travel booked within Egencia. For travel booked outside of Egencia, team members will need to cancel all items booked (flight, hotel, conference, and rental car). For the flight, it is likely that you will receive a travel voucher for future travel. If there are cancellation fees or other fees or costs not waived or reimbursed, you can request reimbursement from IU Health. Please wait to submit this expense for reimbursement; specific guidance for these submissions will be forthcoming.

Will my travel plans for later this year be cancelled?
Travel plans booked within Egencia will be cancelled on a rolling basis, 45 days out; meaning that each day; travel one and a half months into the future will be cancelled.

Can I book flights through Egencia for conferences in the future?
IU Health has restricted business travel. Business travel may not be booked until IU Health lifts its travel restrictions.

I want to attend a conference later this year. Can I book my own flight so I can change or cancel it more easily and get my money back?
IU Health's travel restrictions are in place until further notice. No business travel should be booked during this travel restriction through any mechanism. Once the travel restrictions are lifted, the travel should be booked via Egencia, per policy.

My flight booked through Egencia was cancelled.
Some airlines are providing partial credits or open tickets with a service fee to the booking team member.

- **What if I receive an open ticket and am NOT able to use the ticket or credit due to circumstances?** Contact APtravelexp@iuhealth.org.
- **How will I know if a ticket or credit was reissued?** When you log into Egencia, you will see the result.
- **How do I use it?** To use credits or to re-book a ticket, call Egencia Agent 877-285-8733
- **How do I know if it needs to be used in a certain time frame?** You will see this information when you log onto Egencia.

I booked outside of Egencia and cancelled my business trip due to the travel restrictions. I paid for the conference with my personal credit card. Can I be reimbursed for any non-refundable portion?
Yes. Non-refundable conference or travel-related expenses are reimbursable. Please retain any receipts or notifications and wait to submit this expense for reimbursement; specific guidance for these submissions will be forthcoming.

I booked a conference on my personal credit card, and already submitted and received reimbursement. I just contacted the conference to cancel and they will refund the cost of the conference to me.

- **Is there a way to reverse a reimbursement?** No. IU Health cannot draw funds from your bank account. You will need to repay this amount to IU Health.
- **How can I repay IU Health?** If you receive a refund (either full or partial) for an expense for which you were already reimbursed by IU Health, please repay the amount you were refunded to IU Health. You may send a check addressed to IU Health with the Chrome River Expense ID # in the Memo line. Mail checks to: AP Travel, IU Health Accounts Payable, 950 N Meridian St Indianapolis, IN 46204

I already received reimbursement for a conference that was cancelled. They will refund my money. Can I keep the original reimbursement and use it for a future expense? No. Any money refunded to you for an expense already reimbursed must be repaid to IU Health using the repayment process noted above.

I booked a business trip using Egencia that now needs to be cancelled. My reservation indicated that my personal credit card would be charged at check-in. Am I responsible for cancelling since they were going to charge my personal card?
There is nothing you need to do. IU Health's corporate account was used to guarantee reservations and Accounts Payable will process all cancellations for bookings made through Egencia. Your personal credit card should not have been charged and would have only been used for incidentals incurred during your stay.

I paid for a conference with my credit card but have not submitted anything for expense reimbursement. What should I do?
Per IU Health's travel restrictions, you will need to cancel and request a refund. Please retain documentation of the cancellation, but wait to submit this expense for reimbursement; specific guidance for these submissions will be forthcoming.

Will the 60 day expense reimbursement submission window remain in effect?
IU Health Accounts Payable will relax the submission window for COVID-19 related expense submissions. Please keep in mind that all other guidelines in the Business Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy still apply.

I had booked a conference through the Vendor Payment Request (VPR) process. What do I need to do?
You should contact the conference to cancel and request a refund for the event. They should send the refund back to IU Health.

I had to cancel my recent trip for continuing medical education (CME). Will my CME allowance also reflect the cancellation?
Your CME allowance will be credited back to you. If you booked through Egencia, Accounts Payable and Finance will be correcting and crediting your CME account. More guidance on CME credits will be forthcoming. Please be patient as it may take some time to process and track CME credits.

I booked my CME trip through Egencia and my flight is only partially refundable. Will I be able to get the full CME credit back?

Yes. Please be patient as there will be many CME requests to process. If you still have questions, please contact your CME coordinator or practice manager to help ensure you get full credit back to your CME account.

How can I confirm that this did not affect my CME funds?
Please be patient as there will be many CME requests to process. If you still have questions, please contact your CME coordinator or practice manager to help ensure you get full credit back to your CME account.

Virtual screening clinic

What is the virtual screening clinic?
The Virtual Screening Clinic connects patients via video with physicians, advanced practice providers and/or nurses to screen patients from home, potentially eliminating the need to visit physician offices, urgent cares or emergency departments. The team will recommend and facilitate appropriate pathways for care, and provide direct access and communication with local hospitals as medically appropriate.

What technology is required for the virtual screening?
To use the app, a person needs to have access to the internet and can connect using a smart phone, tablet, or computer. Instructions for downloading and using the app.

Do you have to be in Indiana to get the screening?
Yes, the screening is available to any individual physically located in the state of Indiana. At this time, we cannot provide virtual services across state lines because our clinicians aren't licensed to practice in other states outside of Indiana.

Are there any age limits for receiving a Coronavirus screening?
No, our team will assess people of all ages to recommend pathways for care.

Is the screening free?
Yes, the screening is completely free and patients will not be asked for any payment or for insurance information.

Do you have to be insured to receive a virtual screening?
No, insurance is not required and you will not be asked to provide us with your insurance information.

Is the screening available to patients who do not speak English?
Yes, IU Health can connect the patient and provider with a translator to help complete the screening.

Can IU Health team members use the app?
Yes, team members should use the app if they would like a Coronavirus screening.

Will documentation flow to Cerner?
Yes, our virtual team documents directly into Cerner.

How long will patients have to wait for their screening?
Wait times vary based on call volumes.

Once you've connected with a nurse, how long does the appointment take?
This varies depending on each patient's unique case.

Can I tell a patient to use the app rather than come to my emergency department/urgent care/clinic?
If they call with concerns of having Coronavirus, yes. If they arrive at your location, defer to local protocols.

If it is determined that the patient needs emergency care, do we only send to IU Health hospitals?
No, we determine the best hospital for the patient and then communicate directly with that facility to facilitate a safe arrival for the patient.

Can deaf or hearing-impaired patients use Virtual Screening Clinic?
Currently, the Virtual Screening Clinic cannot integrate with a third party interpretive service app. However, there is an ability for an additional participant to be added to the visit who could be utilized as an interpreter during the COVID-19 Virtual Screening.

Team Member COVID-19 Virtual Screening and Testing

Should all IU Health team members go through the Virtual Screening Clinic if feeling ill or showing symptoms?
Yes.

When should I contact the Virtual Screening Clinic?
You should contact the Virtual Screening Clinic if you have new onset of viral or flu like symptoms. These include but are not limited to: new cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, or muscles aches.

How do I contact the Virtual Screening Clinic?
Download the Indiana University Health Virtual Visits app (in the App Store or Google Play store) or enroll on your computer. Enroll using the free login and complete your personal profile. For IOS and Android find the "Service Key" options and type in "IUHTEAM". This will allow access to the IU Health

team member service in the application. For full instructions, click here. **This is for IU Health team members only. Please do not disseminate this code to non-IU Health team members.**

Can my family and/or friends use the team member service key?
No. The "IUHTEAM" service key is for IU Health team members only. However, your friends, family, and the general public can receive a free COVID-19 screening via the public service on the app titled "Coronavirus Screen." Note that this is a free screening. Testing coordination is not part of the free service offered to the community.

Is IU Health Covid-19 testing open to the general public?
Not at this time.

Will it cost me anything to use the app or receive a test?
No. The virtual Covid-19 screening is free for team members. If a test is then needed it will also be provided free of charge.

How long will my screening visit take?
Most screening visits take between 10-20 minutes, but due to the volume of visits you could experience a wait before you begin your screening visit. *Please be patient. The clinic is staffed by your IU Health colleagues who are working around the clock to care for you.*

Will I be tested for COVID-19?
Possibly. Based on your screening visit results, you may be referred to a remote specimen collection site.

Is this accessible to the Indiana University School of Medicine?
Yes. All IUSM students and residents of IUSM are able to access the Virtual Screening Clinic by following the same team member process described above.

What do I need to bring to the specimen collection site?
All team members need to bring their IU Health badge, license or other ID and the testing referral note located in "Messages" on the virtual visit app.

How long will my specimen collection appointment take?
Registration and collection will take approximately 15-20 minutes. *Again, please be patient. The clinic is staffed by your IUH colleagues who are working hard to care for you.*

What is the expected turnaround time on COVID-19 test results?
The test results should be available within a few days of specimen collection, but could take longer depending on the volume of tests collected.

How will I learn the result of my COVID-19 test result?
A member of the Virtual Screening Clinic will contact you using the phone number you provided during your initial screening visit to share your test results with you.

What if I don’t have a car?
At this time, the collection sites are only accessible with an automobile. If necessary, consider asking a loved one for a ride or find other means of transportation.

Where are the existing testing sites?
At this time there are IU Health remote specimen collection sites on the west side of Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Lafayette (through Arnett Hospital). There are plans in place to establish additional specimen collection sites in the regions. *Please be patient as we evaluate and establish additional sites.*

Can my family and friends get tested for COVID-19 at the IU Health sites?
Not at this time. IU Health continues to look at other testing pathways to serve the community.

Can I go back to work after I get tested?
No. You should remain self-quarantined until you receive confirmation from the Virtual Screening Clinic of your results. (NOTE: the EOHS (Employee Occupational Health & Safety) Indianapolis office will be the ones to call you with your results as they are partnering with the Virtual Screening Clinic) Based on the result you will be instructed on return to work guidelines. In order to return to work you must first receive your return-to-work authorization from the Virtual Screening Clinic.

Are ESL (English as a Second Language) services available?
Yes.

Can I share the location of the specimen processing location with my loved ones for their use?
No. The Virtual Screening Clinic will provide the address to team members at the time of their virtual visit, in the event a test is necessary. Once they arrive, team members will need to show their badge and ID. At this time, the IU Health specimen collections are not available to the public.

Is it my responsibility to share my test results with my manager?
It is your responsibility to keep your manager updated on your work status during this process. Only you will receive your results and it is up to you with whom you share your results with.

What if I am told to quarantine but I cannot do that at my home?
The Virtual Screening Clinic will connect you with potential options to ensure you can safely quarantine appropriately.

What is the Virtual Screening process for team members?
Click here to see the workflow the Virtual Screening Clinic uses for team members.