HEALTHCARE FACILITIES AND PROVIDERS

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHAT IS COVID-19?
COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a new coronavirus that started spreading in the Hubei Province of China in late 2019. The Metro Public Health Department is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Tennessee Department of Health to inform the public of the best ways to fight and prevent the illness.

WHAT ARE THESE GUIDELINES FOR?
These guidelines are designed to help reduce the risk of exposure of COVID-19 in healthcare facilities and providers. These guidelines provide strategies to keep employees and patients safe and prepare for a possible outbreak.

PROTECTING PATIENTS AND EMPLOYEES
Encourage sick employees to stay home
- Remind workers of sick leave policies and importance of staying home when sick.

Manage respiratory issues at entry
- Screen patients and visitors with acute respiratory illness before entering facility.
- Separate patients with respiratory illness in waiting area to protect other patients.
- Consider strategies to prevent patients from coming to the facility if they can be cared for at home.

Ensure proper use of Personal Protection Equipment
- Conduct inventory of available personal protection equipment.
- Review needed equipment for employees caring for patients with respiratory illnesses.

Communicate with staff and patients
- Share information with staff about preparedness and potential of surge in COVID-19 cases.
- Provide updates to patients about policy changes due to COVID-19 response.

PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS LIKE COVID-19
Stay up to date on current COVID-19 situation
- Know where to turn for reliable information in your community.
- Monitor the CDC’s COVID-19 information site and local health department websites for updates.

Develop, update and review the facility’s emergency plan
- Prepare alternative staffing plans for possibility of heightened staff absenteeism.
- Review staff roles in emergency plan.

Establish relationships with key healthcare and public health partners
- Review plans and response activities in your community.
- Learn about plans to manage patients, accept transfers and share supplies.
- Review any memorandums of understanding or agreements with partners and affiliates to provide support or assistance during emergencies.
- Create an emergency contact list.

Additional information on COVID-19 can be found at Coronavirus.Nashville.gov.