This document provides testing guidance that should be taken to manage ongoing operations and mitigate against the exposure and/or spread of COVID-19. It is provided by HCA Healthcare for informational purposes based on CDC recommendations. Please consult your leadership team should you have any questions related to specific guidelines for your facility.

OUTLINE

Test for COVID-19

Test patients/residents upon arrival ➔ Should be quarantined until the results of the test are returned

All employees should be considered for testing per CDC guidelines ➔

Return to work should be determined by CDC guidelines ➔

Check temperatures

Temperatures of employees and any other appropriate outside party should be taken with a remote thermometer before permitting access to the facility.

- Temperatures in excess of 100.4°F should not be permitted access to the facility and should self-quarantine
- Employees with a temperature in excess of 100.4°F should be tested again for COVID-19

Coordinate laboratory testing services

Many clinical laboratories are offering COVID-19 antibody testing. While antibody testing may be useful to identify past exposure or infection, it does not provide information on whether a patient or employee is actively infected or is immune from re-infection. Long term care facilities should utilize COVID-19 PCR (molecular) testing to determine whether a patient/resident or employee is actively infected.

Contact your current laboratory provider to determine if they offer COVID-19 PCR testing at their laboratory or through a subcontracted laboratory.

Request that your laboratory prioritize COVID-19 PCR testing samples coming from long-term care facilities over general public testing. Both Quest Diagnostics and LabCorp have a prioritization process in place.

Ask your laboratory provider what their turnaround time is for COVID-19 PCR testing. Expected turnaround time for COVID-19 PCR testing is generally within 24-72 hours from sample collection to result.

QUEST DIAGNOSTICS LAB

LABCORP
GUIDANCE

For PCR (molecular) diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2, CDC recommends collecting and testing an upper respiratory specimen. The following are acceptable specimens:

- A nasopharyngeal (NP) specimen collected by a healthcare professional; or
- An oropharyngeal (OP) specimen collected by a healthcare professional; or
- An anterior nares (nasal swab) specimen collected by a healthcare professional or by onsite or home self-collection (using a flocked or spun polyester swab); or
- Nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal wash/aspirate (NW) specimen collected by a healthcare professional.

Identify Scope of Testing
- Number of employees requiring testing
- Number of patients/residents requiring testing

Identify Lab Provider and Testing Capability
- Do you have a current reference lab that you use now for testing?
  - Do they have COVID-19 testing capability?
  - If not, identify a COVID-19 capable reference lab.
- Establish relationship with COVID-19 capable reference lab.
  - Can smaller facilities within the same geographical area “contract” as a group for more reference lab options?

Staff/Education
- Identify internal staff required for specimen collection.
- Educate staff for proper specimen collection.
  - An OP or anterior nares approach may be more tolerable for this patient population, if acceptable to the reference laboratory for testing.
- Eliminate practice of employees working at multiple facilities to avoid cross-contamination or exposure.

Obtain patient/resident specimen
1. Utilize policy for proper identification of patient/resident.
2. Obtain specimen.
3. Label specimen at bedside/point of contact.
4. Store specimen according to reference lab and CDC guidelines.

Coordinate transportation/shipping process for obtained specimens
1. Define process for notification/escalation process for pickup
2. Schedule a date/time with reference lab for large pickup
3. Schedule shipping vendor (i.e. FedEx for large pickup)

CDC Guidelines:
Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):
Please contact your reference laboratory to confirm the types of upper respiratory specimens they accept for COVID-19 PCR (molecular) testing.