

Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Patients with COVID-19

Background

Long-term care facilities with known cases of COVID-19 or multiple cases of unexplained respiratory illness should monitor and track vital signs of residents. If residents have new symptoms or worsening trends in vital signs, they should be placed on [transmission-based precautions](#) and monitored more frequently. Clinical evaluation should be considered. Transfer to higher level care should be based on clinical evaluation of the patient and not solely on test results.

CDC March 23 Guidance: [Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Patients with COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings \(Interim Guidance\)](#)

Disposition of Patients with COVID-19:

Patients can be discharged from the healthcare facility whenever clinically indicated.

If discharged to home:

- Isolation should be maintained at home if the patient returns home before discontinuation of transmission-based precautions. The decision to send the patient home should be made in consultation with the patient's clinical care team and local or state public health departments. It should include considerations of the home's suitability for and patient's ability to adhere to home isolation recommendations. Guidance on [implementing home care of persons who do not require hospitalization](#) and the [discontinuation of home isolation](#) for persons with COVID-19 is available.

If discharged to a long-term care or assisted living facility, AND

- Transmission-based precautions are still required, they should go to a facility with adequate personal protective equipment supplies and an ability to adhere to infection prevention and control recommendations for the care of COVID-19 patients. Preferably, the patient would be placed at a facility that has already cared for COVID-19 cases, in a specific unit designated to care for COVID-19 residents
- Transmission-based precautions have been discontinued, but the patient has persistent symptoms from COVID-19 (e.g., persistent cough), they should be placed in a single room, be restricted to their room
- Transmission-based precautions have been discontinued and the patient's symptoms have resolved, they do not require further restrictions, based upon their history of COVID-19

Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions for Patients with COVID-19:

Hospitalized patients may have longer periods of SARS-CoV-2 RNA detection compared to patients with mild or moderate disease. Severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., medical treatment with immunosuppressive drugs, bone marrow or solid organ transplant recipients, inherited immunodeficiency, poorly controlled HIV) may also have longer periods of SARS-CoV-2 RNA detection and prolonged shedding of infectious recovery. These groups may be contagious for longer than others. In addition, placing a patient in a setting where they will have close contact with individuals at risk for severe disease warrants a conservative approach. Hence, a test-based strategy is preferred for discontinuation of transmission-based precautions for patients who are hospitalized, severely immunocompromised, or being transferred to a long-term care or assisted living facility.

Test-based strategy:

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **AND**
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **AND**
- Negative results of a COVID-19 molecular assay from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)

If testing is not readily available facilities may choose to use the non-test-based strategy for discontinuation of transmission-based precautions or extend the period of isolation beyond the non-test-based-strategy duration, on a case by case basis in consultation with local and state public health authorities.

Non-test-based strategy:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **AND,**
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Note: Nursing homes should admit any individuals that they would normally admit to their facility, including individuals from hospitals where a case of COVID-19 was/is present. If possible, dedicate a unit/wing exclusively for any residents coming or returning from the hospital. This can serve as a step-down unit where they remain for 14 days with no symptoms (instead of integrating as usual on short-term rehab floor or returning to long-stay original room).

The situation regarding COVID-19 is still evolving worldwide and can change rapidly. Stakeholders should be prepared for guidance from CMS and other agencies (e.g., CDC) to change. Please monitor the relevant sources regularly for updates.

FROM:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>
- <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/3-13-2020-nursing-home-guidance-covid-19.pdf>

For further information on the care of persons diagnosed with COVID-19 in LTCF settings, please see the following guidance from CDC and CMS:

- CDC: Interim Additional Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Nursing Homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html>
- CMS: Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of COVID-19 in nursing homes: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/gso-20-14-nh-revised.pdf>

Report of Concern for COVID-19 in a High-Risk Setting

Section I. Facility Information							
Facility Name: _____							
Address: _____				City: _____			
Contact Person (last, first): _____				Title: _____			
Phone: _____		Fax: _____		Email: _____			
Facility type (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Acute care hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term care/rehab facility <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral health inpatient/residential <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Dialysis center <input type="checkbox"/> First responder <input type="checkbox"/> Correctional facility <input type="checkbox"/> Community health clinic/FQHC <input type="checkbox"/> Adult family home <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ If long-term care, select type: <input type="checkbox"/> Skilled nursing <input type="checkbox"/> Rehab/short-stay <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted living <input type="checkbox"/> Independent living							
Which acute care facilities are non-staff generally routed to? _____							
Reason for call/concern: _____							
Does the concern meet the criteria for investigation? Refer to criteria currently used by triage or call center staff <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No							
Section II. Illness and Testing Information							
Non-staff (e.g., residents, patients, inmates)				Staff			
Total number: _____				Total number: _____			
First onset date: ___/___/___ Ongoing? Y/N				First onset date: ___/___/___ Ongoing? Y/N			
Total # symptomatic: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Fever >100°F PLUS cough or sore throat <input type="checkbox"/> Severe respiratory illness or pneumonia requiring hospitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____				Total # symptomatic: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Fever >100°F PLUS cough or sore throat <input type="checkbox"/> Severe respiratory illness or pneumonia requiring hospitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			
# who visited ED: _____				# who visited ED: _____			
# hospitalized: _____				# hospitalized: _____			
# in ICU: _____				# in ICU: _____			
# died since first onset date: _____				# died since first onset date: _____			
# tested: _____				# tested: _____			
	Positive	Negative	Pending		Positive	Negative	Pending
COVID-19				COVID-19			
Influenza A				Influenza A			
Influenza B				Influenza B			
Section III. Infection Control							
Date control measures implemented: ___/___/___ Date control measures stopped: ___/___/___							