



## **POLICY: Proper Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) with COVID-19**

<i>Original Implementation Date:</i>	3/2020	<i>Date Reviewed/ Revised:</i>	4/2020	<i>Area of Responsibility:</i>	Nursing	<i>Version:</i>	1.0
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### **POLICY:**

Sun Health will ensure that all team members are knowledgeable about, and adhere to, all CMS and CDC guidance related to infection control and the proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); particularly the use of PPE when caring for COVID-19 patients.

Team members will be instructed in the appropriate PPE that should be used in the following situations:

- Residents on droplet precautions due to respiratory illness (MRSA, Influenza, COVID-19)
- Residents on airborne precautions due to treatments that result in aerosol generation for presumed or diagnosed COVID-19 patients

Sun Health's campuses with skilled nursing facilities (SNF) are located at Grandview Terrace and La Loma Village will follow all CDC and CMS guidelines where they differ from policy. Sun Health's Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care services on all three campuses will follow the policy as outlined below and the Sun Health Guidelines for Personal Protective Equipment during COVID-19 ("Guidelines").

### **PROCEDURE:**

PPE will be provided for use by team members when they are interacting with residents, to the extent that PPE is available and per CDC guidance on the conservation of PPE. The following guidelines will be followed:

- For the duration of the state of emergency, all team members entering the skilled nursing units or a resident's home who is under self-isolation/quarantine must wear a mask as well as any other PPE outlined in the Guidelines.
- Team members not entering the skilled nursing areas or other residents homes as described above, will wear a mask. See comfort mask guidance below.
- Full PPE should be worn for the care of any resident with known or suspected COVID-19 (residents who have been tested because of symptoms of COVID-19) per CDC guidance on the conservation of PPE.
- If COVID-19 transmission between residents occurs at any Sun Health campus, direct care team member should wear full PPE for the care of all residents irrespective of COVID-19 diagnosis or symptoms.
- Residents who must regularly leave Sun Health campuses for care (dialysis), should wear facemasks when outside their rooms.
- When possible, all residents whether they display COVID-19 symptoms or not, should cover their noses and mouths when team members are in their room. Tissues can be used for this purpose as well as cloth non-medical masks.
- Residents should not use medical facemasks unless they are COVID-19 positive or are assumed to be COVID-19 positive.

- Sun Health reserves the right to increase the use of PPE when deemed necessary for the health and safety of residents, patients, members and team members.

## **POLICY EXPLANATION AND COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES:**

1. Nursing team members will be trained in the proper and appropriate use of PPE when providing care to residents who have been diagnosed with or who are displaying symptoms of COVID-19. PPE required in this situation include gowns, gloves, procedure mask and facemask or eye wear, if available.
  - **Respirator or Facemask**
    - Put on a respirator or facemask (if a respirator is not available) before entry into the patient room or care area.
    - Keep hands away from face
    - The outside of facemasks are contaminated. Team members who need to remove the masks need to do so in a way to prevent contamination by grasping only the bottom, then top ties/elastics.
    - N95 respirators or respirators that offer a higher level of protection should be used instead of a facemask when performing or present for an aerosol-generating procedure. Disposable respirators and facemasks should be removed and discarded after exiting the patient's room or care area and closing the door (see second bullet below). Perform hand hygiene after discarding the respirator or facemask. For guidance on extended use of respirators, refer to the CDC's [Strategies to Optimize the Current Supply of N95 Respirators](#)
      - If reusable respirators (e.g., powered air purifying respirators [PAPRs]) are used, they must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use.
      - If due to supply chain shortages and under direction from the CDC to re-use the N95 mask, team members must store their N95 masks in a paper bag immediately after wearing. If the N95 mask becomes soiled or difficult to breath out of it, then team members should ask for a new N95 mask.
    - When the supply chain is restored, facilities with a respiratory protection program should return to use of respirators for patients with known or suspected COVID-19. Those that do not currently have a respiratory protection program, but care for patients with pathogens for which a respirator is recommended, should implement a respiratory protection program.
  - **Eye Protection**
    - Put on eye protection (i.e., goggles or a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face) upon entry to the patient room or care area. Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection.
    - Remove eye protection before leaving the patient room or care area.
    - The outside of goggles and face shields are contaminated. Team member should remove the goggles or face shields in such a way as to prevent contamination by grasping the "clean" headband or earpieces and pulling away from the body.
    - Reusable eye protection (e.g., goggles) must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use. Disposable eye protection should be discarded after use.
  - **Gloves**
    - Put on clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry into the patient room or care area.
    - Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated.

- Remove and discard gloves when leaving the patient room or care area, and immediately perform hand hygiene.
  - **Gowns**
    - Put on a clean isolation gown upon entry into the patient room or area. Change the gown if it becomes soiled. Remove and discard the gown in a dedicated container for waste or linen before leaving the patient room or care area. Disposable gowns should be discarded after use. Cloth gowns should be laundered after each use.
    - If there are shortages of gowns, they should be prioritized for:
      - Aerosol-generating procedures
      - Care activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated
      - High-contact patient care activities that provide opportunities for transfer of pathogens to the hands and clothing of HCP. Examples include:
        - dressing
        - bathing/showering
        - transferring
        - providing hygiene
        - changing linens
        - changing briefs or assisting with toileting
        - device care or use
        - wound care
2. When providing care which results in aerosol generation (SVN treatments) to a resident with COVID-19, a properly fitting N95 mask should be worn in addition to gowns, gloves and facemask/eye wear, as available.
    - a. Select the size according to fit testing
    - b. Remove according to instructions for the type of respirator.
    - c. Do not reuse single-use-only respirators.
  3. In the event approved medical PPE cannot be obtained, and only in accordance with Federal, State and County guidance, team member may utilize alternate means of protection, such as; cloth face masks, cloth gowns, etc., with the understanding that there is limited knowledge regarding those items capability to protect against the transmission of pathogens to the wearer.
  4. Team member utilizing any approved alternate PPE will be offered education that these non-medically approved items have an unknown capability to protect them but may offer better protection than nothing at all. All team member will acknowledge this education and his/her decision to use the alternate PPE.
  5. Social comfort masks may be allowed in non-resident areas and may not be worn when providing care to any resident.
  6. Guidelines for the use of **comfort masks** are always to be followed:
    - a. Social comfort masks may be supplied by the employee and cannot be shared by more than one person.
    - b. Social comfort masks must meet infection control standards for cleanliness and professionalism and may not include bandanas or scarves.
      - i. Masks are to be laundered each day with soap and water.
      - ii. Masks are to be removed in the same manner as procedure masks by grasping the bottom hem of the mask and ties.
      - iii. Masks are to be removed immediately should they become soiled.

- iv. Avoid touching the outside of the mask unless necessary and be sure to wash hands using proper handwashing techniques after doing so.
- v. As with any PPE, wearing a social comfort mask *is not* a substitute for remaining at home if you are sick.

**Related Policies: Sun Health Pandemic Policies and Emergency Preparedness Plans; Guidelines for Appropriate Level of PPE (this will be updated according to Sun Health Leadership as deemed necessary for the safety of team members and residents).**