Food & Nutrition Division Guidance and Feeding Protocols

Updated March 29, 2020

To provide clarification and guidance on Food & Nutrition Services related to patient, resident, retail and catered services during our System response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are being implemented to temporarily modify and adjust our operating procedures and standards in order to keep patients, colleagues and visitors safe.

There is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food and CDC guidance is to follow routine procedures for cleaning of reusable eating utensils, glasses, and other service wares. Use the following recommendations related retail/patient/resident meal service:

Patient/Resident Feeding:

- Do not use or provide disposable dishware, drinking glasses or eating utensils to patients on isolation precautions for COVID-19. Use routine, reusable utensils, dishware and drinking glasses. The cleaning by Food Services after use will inactivate all coronaviruses including SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/infection-control.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/infection-control.html)
- FANS frontline colleagues should adhere to patient feeding protocols leveraging all standard precaution procedures as well as Isolation precautions for patients who are placed/identified/quarantined, per any order. Food services colleagues will provide food trays for inpatients to the direct care nurse or provider to carry into and then return used tray to the Food Services cart for cleaning. Our System guidance is to minimize the number of colleagues entering the room for the patient under investigation (PUI) or confirmed COVID-19 to those providing direct care.
- Feeding in large communal dining areas for at risk, senior and immune compromised populations should be evaluated. Routine dining services in such settings, including large social gatherings and routine meal periods for long periods of time should be suspended.

Retail/Catered Environments:

- Retail cafeterias and other points of retail operations, e.g. coffee stations, micro-markets, etc. are to remain fully operational at this time. Changes in this position will be address as needed under contingency planning and response. MercyOne’s position is that all ministries will adhere to MercyOne Guidelines, consistent with the CDC, unless state government mandates a different requirement. If the state mandates, we will follow the states’ requirements as directed.
- Adhere to social distancing strategies. To that end, limit seating in the café by closing the second half of the dining area, asking staff to utilize break rooms where physical environs
are often more limited without large crowds, and eliminate/remove tables to increase space and ensure 6’ distance.

- Remove salt, pepper shakers, table tents and napkin holders from tables.

- Sanitize tables after every meal and during service time. (Recommend that FANS Depts. have a dedicated employee assigned to the dining room to sanitize tables and chairs after each customer use during peak hours)

- Using wrapped or self-contained disposable cutlery and condiments

- Ice should be dispensed from a closed container with either gravity fed dispensing or single use, disposable utensils after each instance.

- Eliminate self-serve options in the café or implement a system where shared utensils are cleaned in-between use, require patrons to don gloves prior to use or utilize single use/disposable devices. Assess practicality and sustainability of these options as most effective control is to discontinue self-serve salad and deli stations. Transition to pre-packaged salad and deli items as much as possible for guests.

- Increased presence/installation of hand sanitizer in cafés, coffee shops, micro markets and conference centers at ministry locations

- Cashiers to wear gloves, utilize hand sanitizers and ensure all work stations are clean at all times.

- Encourage the use of grab & go/pre-packaged items for large catered events or plated items.

- To limit traffic and potential exposure, please limit/suspend external vendor deliveries to patient care areas and common areas.

**Food & Nutrition Services Staff Guidelines and Adherence:**

- All FANS colleagues should ensure proper hand washing at all times and in accordance with all regulatory compliance (state, local, FDA, TJC and CDC).

- Any foodservice staff should remain home if sick, per normal protocol. Personal hygiene standards should also be adhered.

- All food handling protocols should continue to satisfy all FDA, CMS, local, state and TJC regulations

- THS managed sites should refer to operating procedures for THS FANS Hospitality operating standards. All other MercyOne sites should refer to their standard operating policies and procedures for food handling guidance as set forth by your managing entity/partner.
Warewashing/Dishwashing:
This means the cleaning and SANITIZING of UTENSILS and FOOD-CONTACT SURFACES of EQUIPMENT.

- The combination of hot water and detergents used in dishwashers is sufficient to decontaminate dishware and eating utensils. Therefore, no special precautions are needed for dishware (e.g., dishes, glasses, cups) or eating utensils; reusable dishware and utensils may be used for patients requiring Transmission-Based Precautions.
  Source: https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines-H.pdf

- (A) The temperature of the wash solution in spray type warewashers that use hot water to SANITIZE may not be less than:
  - (1) For a stationary rack, single temperature machine, 74°C (165°F);
  - (2) For a stationary rack, dual temperature machine, 66°C (150°F);
  - (3) For a single tank, conveyor, dual temperature machine, 71°C (160°F); or
  - (4) For a multitank, conveyor, multitemperature machine, 66°C (150°F).

- (B) The temperature of the wash solution in spray-type warewashers that use chemicals to SANITIZE may not be less than 49°C (120°F).

Food Surface Disinfection:
All FANS Division operating procedures are consistent with the FDA food code and should be referenced.

- Continue to use Ecolab Oasis® 146 Multi-Quat Sanitizer, or Quaternary Ammonium Compound products, as appropriate, for food contact and other surfaces as outlined in THS FANS procedures and standards during our System response to the pandemic of COVID-19. This is a quaternary ammonium compound (QAC). As you’ll see there are innumerable QACs that have been tested against endemic human coronaviruses (cause a common cold like illness but not COVID-19; same viral structure applies to all members of the coronavirus family) in the EPA’s List N.
  - https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

- There is no reason that Oasis 146 is not also effective microbiocidal product against coronaviruses. However because it is for food contact when originally marketed, there was no need nor reason to test it against coronaviruses. Further sanitizers are formulated to be safe to use for food contact surfaces. Other disinfectants in use in our ministries are developed for application to inanimate surfaces in the healthcare setting, e.g. portable medical equipment, bedside rails, overbed table, plumbing fixtures, etc. and these are not interchangeable nor necessarily safe to use as a food surface sanitizer used by FANS members.

- Coronaviridae family, are lipid enveloped RNA viruses. Enveloped viruses are as a general rule among the most susceptible pathogens to inactivation after exposure to disinfectants (see Figure 1 below). A recent study found a wide range of disinfectants are effective against a surrogate for coronaviruses that has similar viral structure, including a QAC. [Dellanno C, Vega Q, Boesenberg D. The antiviral action of common household disinfectants and antiseptics against murine hepatitis virus, a potential surrogate for SARS coronavirus. Am J
Figure 1 has been published in HICPAC, CDC. Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008, that was last reviewed and updated in May 2019. The principles in this guideline can be applied to the Oasis 146 and this product is safe and effective for use as instructed. Its label indicates it is not only effective against other lipid enveloped viruses like herpes simplex virus but also avian influenza virus.

Food & Nutrition Services Food Inventory and supply requirements:
- Major Broadline Distributors (GFS & Sysco) have indicated that two routine delivery days are being removed (Wednesday & Saturday) in most markets, thus reducing the number of available food delivery days from 6 days down to 4 days.
- In order to mitigate any risk of failure of essential services and to be better prepare for potential increased volume we are increasing the minimum inventory on hand to be 5 days.
- Inventory on hand should assume essential services for:
  - Patient feeding (using total current bed capacity plus locally forecasted surge beds, should they be deployed)
- Please work with your distributor account representative, should you have any immediate needs related to product access. Convenience products – to conserve labor – have been added to MOG’s (Managed Order Guides) for all ministry sites.

FDA Updates: