COVID-19: Stay Informed and Safe

The COVID-19 pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus has unfortunately entered a new phase in central Iowa.

Since March 14, several cases of COVID-19 have been diagnosed in our metro region. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has now declared there is community transmission, which means people with no travel history or known exposure history are coming down with the infection.

Understandably, anxiety is climbing in our community and with our health care colleagues. When out and about in the community, you really have no idea or warning when you may come in contact with a person with the infection - thus the government’s decision to close all manner of establishments where people gather, including events, restaurants and bars.

Infection prevention specialist Dr. Ravi Vemuri reminds us all to stay calm and keep perspective. He says, "As a health care professional you are surprisingly probably safer, as people suspected of having infection are put in isolation and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided for you to take care of our patients."

Practicing meticulous hand hygiene – following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization guidelines – is essential to keeping you and others protected.

"Please follow all health care policies and posted signs meticulously, as we want to preserve PPE for those who are most at risk. Our community needs us to be resilient and strong as the pandemic sweeps through our region."

- Dr. Ravi Vemuri

Find the latest information

MercyOne Central Iowa is committed to ensuring our colleagues have accurate information and are well-versed in protective measures.

New information is continually updated and posted to the website, MercyOne.org/desmoines/COVID.

Questions?
• Ask your supervisor
• Check your huddle board for the latest Process Change Alerts and updates
• Have general COVID-19 questions? Call Polk County Emergency Operations Center’s medical call line, 211.
• Send MercyOne Central Iowa questions to COVID@mercydesmoines.org

Reminder
We are using the same communication process as we did with the Joint Commission readiness – posting new Process Change Alerts in 3-ring binders on huddle boards and ensuring all staff review and document understanding.

“Please follow all health care policies and posted signs meticulously, as we want to preserve PPE for those who are most at risk. Our community needs us to be resilient and strong as the pandemic sweeps through our region,” says Dr. Vemuri. “God bless all of you and your vital work.”
Childcare options for MercyOne employees

The MercyOne Child Development Center will remain open according to its regular schedule during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are opening the center to additional MercyOne employees who may need temporary child care for their child(ren) during this emergency. Registration fees will be waived for MercyOne families needing the service at this time.

For employees needing to use the child development center who do not currently have a child enrolled, please take these steps to enroll your child in temporary care:

- Contact anyone on the center management staff at mcdc@brighthorizons.com or 515-643-9090.
- Download the registration paperwork, and complete it before bringing your child to the center

Please note, the State of Iowa placed restrictions on entering the child care center. You are not able to enter the center to pick up registration packets or take a tour. Please contact the center management with any questions at the numbers or email address above.

Health professions students at Des Moines University are also offering childcare for frontline health care workers during this time. Medical professionals can sign up at [https://forms.gle/2uVfTsuUHqcARV989](https://forms.gle/2uVfTsuUHqcARV989).

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<th>Twos (2 yrs)</th>
<th>Preschool (3 yrs and up)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Half Day 1-5 hours</td>
<td>$44.00</td>
<td>$38.90</td>
<td>$36.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Day 5-10 hours</td>
<td>$60.75</td>
<td>$54.40</td>
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Smile, you’re on Candid Camera!

This month’s compliance focuses on taking photos and other recordings (both video and audio) at MercyOne.

- MercyOne colleagues may make recordings for diagnostic and treatment purposes only. For these situations, patient consent is not required, but you do need to use MercyOne-supplied equipment. Using your personal mobile device represents a significant risk to MercyOne, and you should not do so unless the use of such device is approved by IT Security, the device is encrypted, and accountability procedures are followed. For example, images would need to be deleted immediately.
- For more information, contact the IT Service Desk.
- Remember: You should include recordings and related information in the patient’s medical record.
- MercyOne may make recordings intended to secure the facility. However, signs must be displayed within the areas being monitored indicating video monitoring is in use.
- Patients may make recordings with their own personal devices of newborn babies and of themselves within their own rooms, with the exception of those patients being treated in the Surgery, Intensive Care Unit, and Emergency Departments.
- Patients may also make recordings for education/review purposes for the patient or family care giver. However, such recordings may not:
  - include other patients without their written authorization,
  - include treatment activity without the provider’s agreement which is documented in the record, or
  - include facility colleagues without their verbal consent.
- If patients are making recordings when they are not allowed to do so and refuse to stop when requested, then Public Safety will need to be contacted.
Smile, you’re on Candid Camera

Continued from previous page

- If you find a patient participating in a media interview from their own phone, do not interrupt. Report the interview to Gregg Lagan, MercyOne media relations coordinator, with any information you may have.

- For more information and details, check out MercyOne’s policy, Image Capture.

Sticky Situation

Picture this: Kendra is a nurse in the ED. One evening, a very pregnant woman arrives and, to everyone’s surprise, delivered healthy quintuplets. Soon, local news stations and their cameras were in the ED lobby clamoring for interviews. Kendra always had aspirations of becoming an actress and constantly watched re-runs of Grey’s Anatomy when she wasn’t working. Tonight was her lucky break. She put on some lipstick and introduced herself to the reporter. Did Kendra do the right thing?

No, all media inquiries (whether by phone, email, fax or in-person) should be directed to Media Relations Coordinator, Gregg Lagan, who can be reached via phone at 515-229-1546 or email, glagan@mercydesmoines.org. Sorry, Kendra. Try America’s Got Talent.

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Awareness Week

Monday, March 30 through Sunday, April 5

Next Monday marks the start of National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week, a national health awareness week that offers teenagers information on drugs, alcohol and addiction based on clinical research. Launched in 2010 by the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the goal is to promote educational events so students can learn true, scientific facts about drug and alcohol use and addiction instead of the myths they hear from social media, TV, music and their friends.

Matt Grubb I.A.D.C., counselor at Mercy One First Step Recovery program, shares some early warning signs of drugs or alcohol abuse.

- Isolation factor – you may notice a withdrawal from school or family functions. Your loved one may become dishonest about their whereabouts when questioned. They become disinterested in their previous favorite extra-curricular activities such as sports, band, drama or hanging out with friends.

- Increasing lack of responsibility – There is a significant shift in their performance at school and/or work or not completing chores or errands assigned in the home.

- Significant changes in their friend group – All of their friends have changed and the kids your child used to hang out with aren’t around anymore. Suddenly, they are talking about a new set of “friends,” none of whom you’ve met.

According to Matt, “What is different about this generation of kids using drugs or alcohol, is the internet. There is a plethora of information on the internet about ways to get high, or research what levels of different drugs are dangerous. They can even order products or narcotics directly through the internet. If you are worried, review recent internet searches or trends in what they are looking at online.”

Matt reveals what is most important once you realize there is a problem. “Communication is crucial. It is important to talk about substance abuse and the disease of addiction. We realize there is still a stigma around the disease of addiction that sometimes prevents people from talking about it or getting help.”

Seeking treatment for children or adolescents struggling with psychiatric, substance abuse or other behavioral health problems can be confusing and difficult. The Mercy One First Step Recovery program is available to help people of all ages and includes emergent/urgent assessments, crisis management support, and professional consultations.