Memo

To: MercyOne Managers and Medical Staff
From: Dr. Hijinio Carreon, Chief Medical Officer
Dr. Ravi Vemuri, Medical Director Infection Prevention and Healthcare Epidemiology
Diane Probasco, Market Director Perioperative Services
Date: May 18, 2021
Subject: Outpatient Procedures – Updated COVID Testing Process for Fully Vaccinated Individuals

Introduction:
As we enter the 14th month of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to witness a steady fall in the level of community transmission. Changes will be made in the pre-procedural testing protocol based on the following:

- Governor's proclamation mandating for pre-procedural testing no longer exists
- In excess of 83% of our healthcare worker (HCW) colleagues now fully vaccinated
- Nearly 45% of Iowans fully vaccinated
- The CDC and other entities are reporting extremely low breakthrough infection rates in the fully vaccinated
- Various entities reporting that even if fully vaccinated individuals have breakthrough infections the chance of them transmitting infections is slim.

Based on the above information, we believe we have reached a stage where we can dispense with pre-procedural testing for SARS CoV-2 for some outpatient procedures in individuals who are deemed fully vaccinated for SARS CoV-2 infection.

Masking Policy:
All patients and visitors in MercyOne clinics must agree to wear a mask at all times before and after the procedure while at the MercyOne facility.

Exclusions (Patients in the following groups should be tested for COVID prior to any procedures):
- Any patient that exhibits COVID-19 symptoms as defined by the CDC:
  - Fever or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
Nausea or vomiting
Diarrhea
- Immunocompromised patients. There is limited data on vaccine protection for any patient that is considered immunocompromised as outlined below per CDC:
  o Patients receiving chemotherapy for cancer, hematologic malignancies, being within one year from receiving a hematopoietic stem cell or solid organ transplant
  o Untreated HIV infection with CD4 T lymphocyte count < 200, combined primary immunodeficiency disorder
  o Taking immunosuppressive medications

**Definition of Fully Vaccinated:** Anyone who has completed either a two shot series of one of the two approved mRNA vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna) or a single shot of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine AND they are more than 14 days out from completion of the vaccine.

**Documentation of Fully Vaccinated:** The Official CDC COVID-19 vaccination card duly filled out or clinic/hospital personnel confirming the vaccination in the State of Iowa Immunization Registry information System (IRIS).

**Outpatient Procedures and Locations and Effective Dates:**
**Gastroenterology Endoscopy Procedures (lower) – Effective May 18, 2021:**
- MercyOne Ankeny Health Center Endoscopy Suite
- Mercy West Des Moines Endoscopy Suite

**Pulmonary Function Tests – Effective May 18, 2021:**
- MercyOne Des Moines Pulmonary and ID Clinic PFT Suite

**All Other Outpatient Procedures – Effective June 1, 2021.**

View workflow here.
Addendum

Date: May 26, 2021

From: Ravi K Vemuri, MD, Infection Prevention and Healthcare Epidemiology

The CDC definition of immunocompromising conditions that may lead to suboptimal efficacy of COVID-19 vaccinations are:

- Cancer requiring chemotherapy or radiation therapy within the preceding 6 months.
- Being within one year of receiving a hematopoietic stem cell or solid organ transplant.
- HIV infection with a CD4 count less than 200 cells/cubic mm.
- Combined primary immunodeficiency disorder where patients receive Intravenous or Subcutaneous immunoglobulin treatments.
- On Prednisone >20 mg/day for more than 14 days
- Patients receiving monoclonal antibodies like Remicade, Humira etc.

Patients who have been fully vaccinated AND fall into one of the above six categories will still need to have pre-procedural SARS CoV-2 PCR testing.

Thank you very much.
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