Update: Vaccines, infusions and eye protection

**VACCINES**

As our COVID care evolves, staff vaccinations are available several days each week for first and second doses of the Pfizer BioNtech vaccine. Vaccinations started December 17 and the vaccine clinic is open by appointment. To register for the vaccine, check your work email for the invitation and the initial paperwork. If you have questions about the registration process, email vaccinereg@mercyhealth.com.

**INFUSION CENTER**

On November 23, the BAM unit, short for the medication name, Bamlanivimab, was started in the infusion space in the north building. The infusion contains monoclonal antibodies that fight COVID-19. This medicine is approved for outpatient COVID-19 positive patients who have experienced symptoms for less than seven days, and do not require additional oxygen assistance. Vital signs are taken prior to infusion, and prior to dismissal to home. The infusion lasts an hour and the patient is observed for an additional hour after treatment. The goal of treatment is to prevent cases from becoming severe.

**EYE PROTECTION**

Wearing eye protection is now required when directly caring for all patients due to high positivity rates in Woodbury and surrounding counties. There have been numerous accounts of patients testing negative on admission and then testing positive days later. The two–to 14-day incubation period for COVID-19, as well as some complexities with antigen testing and confirmatory PCR testing, have been identified as contributing factors. COVID-19 continues to pose a silent threat daily for direct caregivers. Wearing eye protection all the time, in conjunction with a mask, will help minimize exposures down to “low risk” instead of “high risk” based on the exposure algorithm.

Healthy bedtime snacks for diabetic patients

Food and Nutrition Services has evaluated current standard hour of sleep (HS) snacks for carb controlled diets. On average, 42% of the snacks were returned to food and nutritional services (FANS). After review of pertinent articles, practice at other health ministries, the opinion of endocrinology department and diabetes education, the decision was made to discontinue delivering a standard HS snacks for carb controlled diets starting January 4.

For those patients who require a bedtime snack, please place an order utilizing the orderable "Snacks". For after-hours snack suggestions, a reference will be posted in the galleys. Great choices for snacks in the galley include single serving peanut butter with crackers, milk with graham crackers, pudding, or fruit cup.
Blood and body fluid exposures

1. Wash area thoroughly with soap and water (no soap in eyes, nose, and or mouth)
2. Report the exposure - inform the person in charge and/or manager
3. Call SOS x2202

An SOS staff member or nursing services will assist you in completing documentation. If a patient test is necessary, lab will be alerted. Only go to Emergency Department if directed or if:

1. You are injured
2. You don’t know whose blood or fluid it is
3. The patient is positive for a blood borne infection

Joint Commission patient interviews

During the Joint Commission visit, surveyors will interview individuals served, patients, residents and their families about:

- Coordination and timeliness of services provided
- Education, including discharge instructions
- Response time when call bell is initiated or alarms ring, as warranted by care, treatment or services
- Staff perception of care, treatment or services
- Staff observance of hand-washing and verifying their identity
- Understanding of instructions (e.g., diet or movement restrictions, medications, discharge and provider follow-up), as applicable
- How staff involved the patient in the pain management plan of care, what their plan of care covers (non-pharmacologic, pharmacologic or a combination of approaches) including evaluating pain and sedation at administration and intervention response.
- Discharge planning and instructions — including diet, activity, medication review and follow-up information
- Rights of individuals served, patients and residents

The surveyor will trace or interview patients and caregivers in a variety of settings and treatment paths. Locations of services often reviewed include the emergency room, ICU, behavioral health, and rehabilitation. For medical-surgical patients, the Joint Commission surveyor will ask to review care of patients whose care plan includes dialysis, suicide precaution care, restraints, sedation and anesthesia, radiology, observation care, blood transfusion, or opioid medications.

The Joint Commission surveyors will also review care delivered by reviewing electronic medical records with a focus on care for deceased or terminal patients, as well as recently discharged patients’ discharge documents and patient education. Discharge planning, education and transfer of care between hospitals and care facilities will see increased focus during our upcoming certification.

Contact Barbara Grotting, Director of Quality, Accreditation and Patient Safety, for more information.

Oxygen tank holders

Tanks can only be transported under transportation carts that have a canister holder. The tanks are under pressure and could become a projectile if punctured or dropped. When moving a patient by bed, use the tanks in the portable holders or the cages that attach to the bed. Radiology, surgical services, and inpatient units should refuse transfer of care for patient until the tank is secure, then continue the handoff of patient care.