COVID-19 FAQ*  
*Information as of 4.15.20

Latest Questions

- Can I get re-infected with COVID? Why are some people so sick and others asymptomatic?  
  Since this is a new virus, we do not have all of science around it, including why some get so sick and others do not. We believe the likelihood of becoming re-infected with COVID-19 is very low but do not know yet that it is zero.

Testing

- Why are testing results taking so late to get back? When will the testing become more efficient?  
  GW Hospital, along with hospitals across the country, is working diligently to increase our ability to test patients. Up until recently, only a few commercial laboratories in the country were able to process these tests and they were backed up due to high demand. We have been very proactive and are pleased to say that we have implemented the ability to do the test onsite and therefore, we are able to receive the results much faster than before.

- How many staff have tested positive for COVID?  
  Staff, like patients, must be treated with the upmost privacy and respect. Should any staff member test positive for COVID, they will be given the same level of privacy and respect that we give to our patients. We are committed to communicating with you and giving you regular updates so that you are best positioned to perform your role. Any employee self-monitoring or undergoing care will speak directly with their supervisor to coordinate their return to work.

- Why aren’t you reporting COVID-19 case numbers daily?  
  Given the nature of this fast moving situation, our communications are focused on specific actions that we are taking to protect and support our patients and staff during this pandemic. We will treat and care for COVID-19 positive patients, as we do with all of our patients – with compassion and the upmost respect for privacy. Our number one focus is on the safety of patients and staff and that is the pertinent and vital information to communicate at this time. We do not communicate numbers on other diagnoses in house and will proceed with treating our COVID-19 patients the same, as is best practice.

- Is there a decision on what patients we are testing? All surgical patients, all ED patients before coming to the unit, psych patients?
As of March 31, all new patients admitted to the facility are being tested. This includes patients before coming in for scheduled procedures and surgeries as well as any patient in the ED and Labor and Delivery who is being admitted.

- **Are all staff going to be tested?**
  As testing capability ramps up, we believe at one point, we may get to the point of testing staff and roll out additional tests. We are not at that point yet but things continue to rapidly change.

- **What are we doing with the tent?**
  The tent is part of our surge planning capacity that will allow us to triage individuals seeking COVID-19 testing who arrive at the hospital through their own transportation. They will be directed to the tent after appropriate triage to help expedite their testing. Individuals who are brought in through ambulance will be triaged in the ED.

- **Is there an update on drive-through testing?**
  As of April 6, The GW Medical Enterprise is offering drive-through and walk-up testing by appointment. Testing will only be conducted by appointment, after a physician has spoken with the patient and has deemed a test is appropriate. To schedule a (video or phone) consultation with a GW physician to be evaluated, please contact (202) 741-2765 Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 6 PM. Or, a person’s regular physician can follow the instructions at [www.gw covid19testing.com](http://www.gwcovid19testing.com) to get patients a referral for testing.
  More details about the process can be found at [www.gwcovid19testing.com](http://www.gwcovid19testing.com).

  We are also staffing a site for testing operated by the District of Columbia at United Medical Center for drive through testing.

**Patient Care**

- **Will some med surg /float pool nurses be cross-trained for the ICU in case our situation changes?**
  Since January, we have been cross training med/surg nurses into the ICU and ED. We will continue this process throughout this pandemic to help leverage our entire work force in the response to COVID 19.

- **How are you protecting nurses while we await patient test results?**
  While awaiting test results, staff will be provided the appropriate PPE in caring for these patients. All precautions should be followed as though they are a confirmed COVID-19 patient while awaiting test results for any patient who is a Person Under Investigation (PUI).

- **Are you quarantining staff that are providing COVID-19 patient care?**
  In accordance with updated CDC guidance, we are not quarantining staff who have provided care to a COVID 19 patient and had an exposure. If a staff member cared for a COVID-19 patient and suspects an exposure, they should contact their manager. Their manager will direct
them to the appropriate clinical resource to determine the level of risk. There is an expectation that all staff are following the PPE protocols 100% of the time. If you suspect an exposure, your manager will send you a link so that you can monitor your temperature every twelve hours. If you are asymptomatic, but then feel ill, do not come to work. Contact your manager who will advise you.

Surge Planning

- **How many patients does GW Hospital anticipate at the peak of this?**
  Unfortunately, the number of patients we will see remains somewhat uncertain. We have developed a number of surge contingency plans to expand our capacity.

- **Where will any overflow of patients go?**
  We have canceled elective procedures, which has decreased our patient census, allowing for more capacity. We are also looking at all areas of the hospital and believe that providing care within the walls of our facility is the safest. We anticipate increasing the number of patients throughout various areas of the hospital. Our goal is also to use an alternate care site near GW Hospital to provide lower level medical care needs for patients recovering from COVID-19 should the need arise.

- **What actions are being taken to ensure the hospital does not run out of supplies?**
  We are working closely with UHS and the DC Government to increase equipment and supplies to help meet the needs of our community. In addition, we are very grateful for the donations we have received from the community.

- **Have you communicated with hospital administrators in NYC and what can we learn?**
  We have contingency plans and are learning from our colleagues in NYC. We are working with the District government and GW partners to ensure we are prepared.

**PPE**

- **What are the guidelines for masks in the hospital?**
  The CDC recently advised on the use of face coverings. In accordance with this, effective Wednesday, April 15, every person in a GW Hospital facility must wear a face covering, whether it be a surgical, procedural or cloth face mask. This guidance will continually be monitored and evaluated with updates as deemed appropriate given the current situation. Note that this message does not affect the use and conservation of N-95 masks which are used in the care of a suspected or positive COVID patient. Please see below for more specific details.

**Patient Care**
Those involved in direct patient care must wear the appropriate PPE to care for that patient safely. Individuals should continue to follow all best-practice isolation and PPE precautions in the care of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. When you are not directly caring for an
isolation patient but work in a patient care area, wear a surgical mask, signed out from the mask distribution center located in the Operating Room Classroom. This process remains the same as the one that we implemented out of an abundance of caution on March 26.

Non-Patient Facing
In accordance with the CDC, it is advised that you wear a face covering. You may bring a cloth or homemade mask in for use in the hospital facility. We also have been humbled by the number of generous donations that we have received, including handmade masks in which we currently have 1,000 for distribution. Each employee can obtain one of these donated masks by signing it out from the mask distribution center located in the Operating Room Classroom. We will limit one mask per employee to ensure we can support all needs. Please note that cloth masks should be washed after each hospital shift or day per CDC guidelines. Cloth masks must NOT be used in clinical patient care activities and in isolation precaution areas.

If you have questions about obtaining a mask or the necessary PPE, ask your supervisor immediately so that we can assist you.

- **Can staff wear personal masks or bring PPE from home?**
  If a staff member has an n95 at home that has been fitted to them, they can wear it. However, we are encouraging staff to wear the PPE that we are providing. We have adequate supplies of n95 masks that have been adequately fit tested. In addition, on March 25, we began encouraging the use of surgical masks for all staff and we have a generous supply of donated masks from our community for our non-patient facing staff. We do not at this time need you to bring your own PPE from home.

- **What are the hospital's recommendations for PPE for providers working with patients with artificial airway at GWUH? Specifically all the health care providers who provide care within a 6 ft. range and/or provide tracheal suction?**
  We continue to follow CDC guidelines and best practices on patient care and PPE as it relates to COVID-19 patients. Given that these aerosolizing procedures represent the highest risk, we want to have the highest level of protection for our staff members. We have sufficient supplies of PPE to always use an n95 mask. This is what is indicated for use in these procedures. We have implemented 24/7 safety officers to assist with high-risk procedures.

- **If the hospital allows a visitor for procedural patients, is that individual required to wear a mask?**
  With procedural patients, we have asked the person driving them home post-procedure to use a mask. They are also being screened at entry for symptoms and travel history. We are containing them to one area to wait for their loved ones.

- **Going forward, would the hospital invest in more permanent 95 respirator mask?**
  GW Hospital regularly invests in its facility, equipment and people to heighten safety and quality of care. Thanks to this continual investment, we have been pleased to have had an
adequate supply of PPE throughout this unique and unprecedented situation to date. We continually source PPE nationally and globally through UHS and we have received donations from our community. We will continue to make these investments and follow best-practices and guidelines.

- **Do we have face shields and hardcovers available for med/surg nurses?**
  It is the expectation that staff are provided with the appropriate PPE for the situation. There are various levels of exposure and risk, however, the hospital has the appropriate PPE for all staff regardless of the unit in which they are serving our patients. We have face shields, as well as glasses and goggles that we are also using. If you are encountering issues, inform your supervisor immediately so that we can assist.

- **What precautions are there for EVS to ensure there is adequate PPE?**
  On Wednesday, March 25, we began encouraging all staff to wear surgical masks out of an abundance of caution. When assisting with COVID-19 cleaning of rooms, the standard infection prevention guidelines and processes remain the same and should be followed. If you are encountering issues, please immediately notify your supervisor and escalate accordingly. It is the expectation that all staff have the necessary PPE they need to safely perform their role.

- **What do you suggest an employee do if asked to see a patient but the proper PPE is not available?**
  It is the expectation that all necessary PPE is available to our staff and if this occurs, you should notify your supervisor so that we can assist with getting you PPE. We continue to have an adequate supply of resources. The staff member must use appropriate PPE for the appropriate indications, in the appropriate setting, at the correct time.

- **What about PPE for the cafeteria workers?**
  While there are currently no guidelines from the CDC or DC Department of Health for food establishment workers to wear masks, out of an abundance of caution, we are implementing required mask usage in our cafeteria, retail and kitchen.

- **Who can I talk to about getting the N95 mask that fits my small face? I've been PAPR tested - are we getting more PAPRs?**
  Contact Professional Development and Education to be fitted for a mask and receive a recommendation on the best mask to use.

**HR-Related Questions**

- **What do I do if I am exposed at work?**
  Our employees are our most valuable resource and we are committed to their health and safety. If you have employees who have been exposed to COVID-19, we have developed resources for tracking symptoms, testing and monitoring their ongoing health situation.
It is required that managers enter their employees info into the Staff Tracking Tool and send their employees the Self-Monitoring Tool for completion. Both tools are available on the Defining Medicine Intranet COVID page (links are included below):

For each employee who has been exposed, please follow these steps:

1. Employee contacts their manager
2. Manager sends COVID-19 Self Monitoring Tool to the employee for them to complete after you speak with them: https://forms.gle/DVf1yMootpd4s9A87. Also, manager directs employee to complete Self-Monitoring tool twice a day @ 12 hour intervals to record their temperature. Contact the Command Center for a thermometer, if needed by your employee. Also please note that Self Monitoring Tool is best viewed on employee’s cell phone.
3. Manager to enter the employee’s information into the Staff Tracking Tool available on the COVID 19 intranet webpage: https://forms.gle/GcJZy7X2UrddS55NA.
   a. For all Nursing Departments: The Manager will Tiger Text their Director and Hazel Darisse, Assistant CNO, to notify them of the exposure. The ACNO notifies the Manager if it is necessary to have the employee tested for COVID 19 on day 7 from the exposure for screening purposes.
   b. For all Advanced Practice Providers: APP notifies the APP Co Directors and informs the APP if it is necessary to have the employee tested for COVID 19 on day 7 from the exposure for screening purposes.
   c. For all Other Departments: The Manager will tell their employee to contact Infection Prevention at 202-715-4448. Infection Prevention will speak with the employee to determine if it is necessary to have the employee tested for COVID 19 on day 7 from the exposure for screening purposes. Infection Prevention will notify the Manager via email.
4. Manager schedules COVID test appointment for the employee by emailing covidstafftesting@gwu-hospital.com. Please include the following employee info:
   i. Name
   ii. DOB
   iii. Department
   iv. Supervisor
   v. Email
   vi. Home/Cell Phone
   b. ED will email testing appointment time to the employee and the manager. Testing will occur in the ED tent located outside of the hospital (open 7 days a week, 12:00PM – 8:00PM). Please relieve your employee of clinical duties as it is difficult to predict tent traffic.
   c. For emergent situations or if the employee is ill, Manager will send employee directly to ED for testing.
5. The Admitting Department will register the employee at the ED tent.
   a. If patient exposure, employee will be registered under worker’s compensation.
b. For all other exposures, employees will be registered using employee’s health insurance (no copay will be required).

c. Employees who do not have a test within the indicated time frame will be suspended until they are tested or have completed a 14 day quarantine.

6. All employees tested will be called back within 1 day with their test results.

   If an employee’s test is positive:

   a. The Emergency Medicine Physician will contact the employee with the test result.
   b. HR will contact employee to provide assistance on leave and benefits questions.
   c. If employee has tested positive, and has any symptoms, they will be retested 7 days after all symptoms have resolved.
   d. If employee has tested positive and has no symptoms, they will be retested 7 days later.
   e. **If employee has tested positive, they cannot return to work until they test negative and have been cleared by Employee Health.**

    If you have any questions, please contact the GW Hospital Center Command Center at 202-715-4242.

Residents and Fellows should follow a different process at this time. Both of these processes are posted to the intranet COVID-19 page.

• **What do I do if I feel ill at work?**

You are our most valuable resource and we are committed to your health and safety. If you become ill, we have developed a process for providing COVID-19 testing and the resources you need to recuperate at home.

For each employee who is ill, please follow these steps:

1. If symptomatic with fever, cough, or shortness of breath while at work, please stop your work immediately, make sure your mask is on properly, perform hand hygiene, ensure a safe transfer of your patient, and leave your clinical area.
2. Contact your manager.
3. After you speak with your manager, they will send you the COVID-19 Self Monitoring Tool for you to complete: https://forms.gle/DVf1yMootdp4s9A87. You will also need to complete the Self-Monitoring tool twice a day @ 12 hour intervals to record your temperature. Please note that Self Monitoring Tool is also located on the hospital intranet and is best viewed on your cell phone.
4. Your manager will send you directly to the ED for testing. Your manager will alert the charge nurse that you are coming.
5. When you arrive for testing, the Admitting Department will register you.
6. You will be called back within 1 day with your test results.
7. If your test is positive
   a. The Emergency Medicine Physician will contact you with the test result.
b. HR will contact you to provide assistance on leave and benefits questions.
c. You will call Sedgwick Leave Absence Management at 1-855-653-7472 and submit a Request for Leave of Absence to your Manager.
d. You will also call Sedgwick Worker’s Compensation at 1-877-219-7732 only if the following apply:
   i. You have a positive COVID-19 test or you have received medical documentation to support a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.
   ii. Positive COVID diagnosis is a result of a workplace exposure.
e. If you have tested positive, and have any symptoms, we will retest you 7 days after all symptoms have resolved. Your manager will schedule the follow-up test in the ED Tent.
f. If you have tested positive and have no symptoms, you will need to stay home and be retested 7 days later. Your manager will schedule the follow-up test in the ED Tent.
g. Anyone who does not have a test within the indicated time frame will be suspended until they are tested or have completed a 14 day quarantine.
h. **If you have tested positive, you cannot return to work until you have tested negative and been cleared by Employee Health. In addition, if you have tested positive, you may not care for immunocompromised patients until 14 days after onset of illness.**

If you have any questions, please contact your manager.

- **I am a manager, and I received a call from my employee about a suspected COVID-19 exposure. What do I do first?**
  1. First, you MUST enter the employee in the Staff Tracking Tool on Defining Medicine/COVID-19. This is policy and must always be followed in order for us to protect our staff.
  2. Two, send the self-monitoring link to the employee.
  3. Three, if a nursing division employee, contact your Director and the ACNO for next steps. If non-nursing, refer the employee to Infection Prevention who will advise the employee and the manager of next steps.

- **What if we are late because we are stopped by police? Will we be punished through our tardy policy?**
  During this unusual time, we will need to look at time and attendance carefully and not unduly penalize people in such situations. We do want everyone to be here on time so that we can best serve our patients and relieve the previous shift. However, we have spoken with management about looking at each case and ensuring that we are doing the right thing.
**Will we receive any hazard pay for taking care of COVID patients?**

Our team regularly treats and cares for individuals with highly infectious diseases. We follow all guidelines from the CDC and provide the appropriate education and PPE to protect both our patients and our staff. While other hospitals may be considering hazard pay, we do not know of anyone who has announced a payment of hazard pay. It is our responsibility that GW Hospital remain financially viable to support our staff during and following this pandemic. We will come out on the other side of this situation, stronger and better as a team and hospital.

**Can the hospital offer any reduced parking options to assist with transportation?**

GW Hospital does not own any parking garages in the area and we do not have jurisdiction over street parking for hospital staff. We are doing our best to partner and get discounts on parking and have brought some discounts forward. We will continue to look at this and will bring anything available to your attention. We are pleased to continue to offer our monthly commuter subsidy to support you in transportation. The transportation subsidy is an investment to support our staff, slightly over $1M per year. Any discounts for GW Hospital staff that we obtain would be open to all GW Hospital staff equitably. Insert information about reduced parking options.

**What are you doing about ELB and PTO for staff who have to stay home due to COVID-19?**

First, we have relaxed our ELB policy so that staff no longer have to take the pre-requisite two days of PTO if they are ill for any reason. If you become ill for any reason, you may begin taking ELB immediately. You should also contact Sedgwick Leave Absence Management at 1-855-653-7472.

Staff who must quarantine due to caring for a patient may be eligible to workers compensation. Staff in this situation should call Sedgwick Worker’s Compensation at 1-866-648-8994.

In addition, staff who are asked to self-quarantine who have an exposure at work unrelated to patient care, are now eligible to receive disaster, non-productive pay while in quarantine. This is possible if you meet criteria of completing a consult with Infection Prevention, your Manager has submitted your name into the Staff Tracking Tool, and you are self-monitoring your temperature every 12 hours. Links for both the Staff Tracking tool and the Self-monitoring tool on our intranet, [http://go.gwu.edu/covid](http://go.gwu.edu/covid)

If staff choose to travel to an area with high activity, they will be asked to use PTO or take leave without pay before returning to work.

Lastly, these are unprecedented times in which difficult decisions will have to be made as we strive to sustain our staff while managing the unknown and preparing for our recovery.

I am a manager, and my employee was quarantined due to a work related, nonpatient care exposure prior to the announcement of disaster, non-productive pay. Is this pay retroactive?
Yes, if all criteria are met, the manager should submit a payroll correction form.

- **Will staff have PTO added to our bank?**
  We are committed to caring for you and working together. For any exposures at work, we are looking at our policies and making adjustments to help you through these situations.

- **What is the central point for donations and how are these donations being distributed?**
  We have established a designated central donation line for medical supplies. The phone line is 202-715-4559 and the email is COVIDdonations@gwu-hospital.com. This ensures that all medical supply donations are coming to one area and we are keeping all of these together. At this time, we have an adequate supply of our own medical supplies and we are keeping the donations on hand, should we need them in the future. Food donations are also being routed through one designated area of the patient experience team and these are being distributed fairly among units.

  All donations to support our effort are greatly appreciated. Distribution is managed through our incident command center to ensure needs are met.

  Please be aware that GW Hospital is not able to provide a tax-deductible benefit, however, coordination through GW Hospital Women’s Board is the best means of obtaining a tax-deductible benefit for the donation.

**Former Questions**

**GW Hospital Specific Questions**

**Preparedness and Process**

- **What is GW Hospital doing to prepare?**
  We are working closely and regularly with our partners at UHS, GW University and the GW Medical Faculty Associates to be proactive to this current outbreak. We are following guidelines from CDC, WHO and D.C. Department of Health including:
    - Early identification of suspected patients
    - Appropriate isolation of such patients – droplet and airborne
    - Use of the CDC recommended PPE
    - Patient testing under CDC and DC Health guidance
    - Safe disposition of such patients, to either inpatient admission to a proper setting or discharge
  We have activated our incident command structure to monitor the situation closely for immediate response and action during this evolving situation, including, but not limited to the following in response to this national emergency:
    - Surge capacity planning
    - Expanding treatment spaces
Visitation restrictions

- **What are the visitor restrictions?**
The George Washington University Hospital is temporarily restricting all visitors, as of March 13, 2020. Exceptions to these restrictions can be made in special circumstances, and by the Incident Commander, including:

  - End of Life Care,
  - The guardian of a pediatric/neonatal patient,
  - Labor and delivery – one visitor (this includes either the professional support person or one loved one). Visitor must remain in the hospital for duration of stay.

To seek approval, call 202-715-4195.

For all exceptions approved, individuals are subject to screening and will be prohibited if they have been in contact with someone with fever, cough or influenza-like symptoms within the last 48 hours; a known or suspected COVID-19 patient; and/or have traveled to an affected country or high-risk domestic area. Additionally, individuals will be required to practice effective hand hygiene upon entering the facility as well as entering and exiting a patient room.

- **Can I still walk through the ED? How should I enter and exit the hospital?**
The ED entrance should be used for those seeking medical care only. Employees should not be entering or exiting the hospital through the ED. Rather, all employees should enter and exit through the main lobby doors. We will have security available after hours to assist employees in and out of the hospital main lobby entrance. You can contact security at x5000 after 10 p.m. and before 5:30 a.m. to exit and enter the main lobby for hospital business.

- **What do I do if I feel sick outside of work?**
  **If you have symptoms of illness including a respiratory infection or another infection with fever, call your supervisor and do not report to work.**

For symptoms related to COVID-19 or other illness, stay home and contact your manager immediately. See a healthcare provider immediately. If you do not have a primary care physician, you can visit one of the GW Immediate and Primary Care locations in Cleveland Park, McPherson Square and Rhode Island Avenue:

- **Cleveland Park**
  2902 Porter Street, NW
  Washington, DC 20008
  202-525-5287

- **McPherson Square**
  1101 15th St NW
  Washington, DC 20005
What happens if a patient comes to the ED and is suspected of COVID-19?
We will screen the patient using CDC guidelines and make a recommendation whether to test. If the patient has mild symptoms, we will discharge them to self-isolate at home until the test results are returned. If the patient is acutely ill, we will admit the patient and treat them as though they are positive until test results are returned, while maintaining all appropriate precautions for staff and other patients.

Are we able to test at GW Hospital?
Yes, we are now able to test onsite at GW Hospital.

What will happen if I interact with a COVID-19 positive patient?
First, contract your manager. A consult will then occur with either your Nursing Director (for nursing division employees only) or with Infection Prevention. In most cases, the employee can remain at work, wear a mask, and self-monitor. The manager will also schedule an appointment for a COVID-19 test on the 7th day after the suspected patient or community exposure in the Tent or, if after hours, in the ED. Employees in this situation need to monitor their temperature and symptoms through the Self-Monitoring Tool every 12 hours.

If I interact with a patient who later tests positive, will I be notified?
Yes, your manager will notify any staff who have interacted with a patient who has tested positive for COVID-19.

If an outpatient area suspects that a patient has COVID-19, how should we proceed?
If you suspect a case of COVID-19, please direct them to our ED. As is standard process when directing a patient to the ED from an outpatient location, please call the ED ahead of time. Notify them of symptoms and potential COVID-19 infection.

If a patient is in a hospital room and tests positive, how is the room cleaned?
We have an established process for terminally cleaning rooms that we use with highly infectious diseases such as TB and meningitis. We will follow that process in the event we have a positive COVID-19 patient.

What if I have exposure outside of work to someone who tested positive?
Contact your manager. Process is same as above for work- patient or work-employee
What if I have secondary exposure to someone who tested positive?
Secondary exposure occurs when you have been exposed to someone who has been exposed to someone with COVID-19. CDC guidelines do not require any additional precautions or changes for the individual with secondary exposure. You do not need to report unless you are directly exposed to someone with COVID-19 or become ill with a fever or cough.

What do I do if an employee calls out unrelated to COVID-19?
Managers from departments other than inpatient nursing, are required to report the number of call-outs which are unrelated to COVID-19 to their HR partner. If an employee calls out under ASSLA due to illness, the manager can screen for symptoms.

Travel

What are the travel restrictions?
The CDC recommends that travelers avoid all non-essential travel to Level 3 countries. Check with the CDC website before making travel plans. Here is a link to that website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html

What if I travel to a highly infected area?
Countries considered to be Level 3 risk by the CDC include:
  - China
  - South Korea
  - Iran
  - Italy
  - United Kingdom and Ireland
  - Most of Europe

In addition, there are hot spot areas in the U.S., including New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

If you travel to one of these countries or high-risk areas, you must notify your manager. Please check the CDC website for up-to-date travel information: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html.

PPE

Does GW Hospital have enough PPE?
While GW Hospital has sufficient supplies, we must ensure that we are adequately using these resources. As such, we have secured our masks to ensure they are available to the staff who need them to provide clinical care.

Should I be fitted for an N95 mask?
If you are providing patient care, you should be fitted. You can get fitted by Professional Development and Education.

**HR Questions**

- **If I am quarantined due to a positive COVID-19 test due to a patient exposure or an employee exposure, do I use PTO?**
  If it was an exposure due to caring for a patient, contact your manager and follow the process to be eligible for workers compensation. If it is from contact at work but unrelated to patient care, contact your manager who will connect you with infection prevention. If you are asked to quarantine and meet other criteria, you will be eligible to be paid through a disaster non-productive pay code.

  If you are quarantined due to personal travel and are asymptomatic, you can use PTO or unpaid time. We will look at an alternative option for time away from work if the quarantine is a result of patient exposure.

  If you have symptoms, on quarantine or not, call Sedgwick at 855-653-7472 or visit [https://viaoneexpress.sedgwickcms.net/UHS](https://viaoneexpress.sedgwickcms.net/UHS). We encourage all employees and supervisors to review the HR leave policy.

**General COVID-19 Questions**

- **What is COVID-19?**
  The 2019 Coronavirus, or COVID-19, is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. It is part of a larger family of viruses called coronavirus, some of which are in circulation normally and can cause illnesses like the common cold. This Coronavirus is not the same strain coronavirus as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

- **Where is COVID-19?**
  The first confirmed case of the COVID-19 in the United States was reported in January 2020. Since then, cases have spread throughout the US. This is an evolving situation.

- **What are the symptoms?**
  Symptoms of the COVID-19 can include:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath

- **How is COVID-19 spread?**
According to the CDC, the virus is thought to have originated from an animal but is now spreading from person to person. Coronaviruses, including this new one, are thought to spread via exposure to an infected person’s respiratory droplets—such as those produced when a person coughs or sneezes.

- **How long after infection are symptoms apparent?**
  Public health officials say the symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

- **What is the screening process for patients?**
  Currently the screening includes looking at:
  - Symptoms of COVID-19
  - Travel to a highly infected area or close contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19
  - Differential diagnosis testing to determine if the individual has another infection such as the flu

- **How can I help protect myself from getting COVID-19?**
  The CDC recommends some simple steps to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick
  - Stay home when you are sick
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

- **What do I do if I am sick?**
  Stay home if you are sick. If you feel you need to seek medical care, please call the ED in advance of arriving and wear a mask, if possible.

- **Should I wear a mask?**
  There is new recommendation from the CDC for the use of masks by the general population in the United States or while traveling.

- **Does the flu shot protect against this?**
  The seasonal flu vaccines does not protect against COVID-19. However, we are still in flu season and it does help provide some protection against the flu.

- **How many tests have been done in the region?**
  You can check local health department websites to see how many tests have been confirmed.

- **Where can I find updates?**
You can find updates from trusted sources including the CDC, World Health Organization and your local health departments. In addition, you can find GW-related updates on our intranet COVID-19 information page and through regular electronic communications. You can also go to http://go.gwu.edu/covid for GW-related information.