

WashU Med COVID-19 Update

March 26, 2020

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

Protecting COVID-19 frontline workers

The safety of our health-care workers is absolutely paramount as we witness the community spread of COVID-19. WUSM, BJH, SLCH and BJC leadership are committed to protecting our workers and have agreed to specific changes to existing policies regarding the use of PPE. These changes ensure that frontline workers and those that perform high-risk procedures have access to the highest level of personal protection.

With that said, it is important for everyone to understand that access to supplies of PPE is limited and that critical shortages exist. Each of us has to do our part in conserving these resources as we enter a new phase of this pandemic. We collectively are exploring every opportunity to source additional products locally and internationally. We are encouraging new manufacturing of these products so that each and every one of our employees can feel safe while taking care of our community.

There are many uncertainties ahead of us. We do not know the degree of surge that we will see or the reliability of suppliers. We will keep you informed of these critical issues and update these policies as needed. You may review updated [PPE Guidance here](#).

David H. Perlmutter, MD

Executive Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs and Dean

COVID-19 triage spaces expanded



Emergency Department

In preparation for and management of COVID-19 patients, the Emergency Department has designated a portion of the waiting room where patients with symptoms will be directed to start their assessment process. In the event the patient flow requires additional space, an alternate care site has been established in a trailer outside the ED specifically to care for suspected COVID-19 patients. The trailer is an extension of the ED and not a standalone testing site. It is outfitted with a waiting room and provider care area. A patient flow plan has also been established to ensure safe and effective patient care.

Women's Assessment Center

Because COVID-19 symptoms for a pregnant woman can be different from the general population, a white tent has been erected outside of Parkview Tower to triage obstetrics patients. The tent is an extension of the Women's Assessment Center, not a COVID-19 screening site. Obstetrics patients who could be at risk for respiratory illnesses or COVID-19 will be given a mask before entering Parkview Tower. The tent will not replace the current screening process in the lobby of Parkview Tower and signage will be displayed to direct other patients and visitors. The plan is for the tent to be operational in a week.

Videos: How to properly don and remove PPE

BJC HealthCare infection prevention specialists demonstrate proper procedures for putting on and removing personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for COVID-19 patients:

- [PPE Instructions for COVID-19 Clinically Stable Patient Care](#)
 - [PPE Instructions for COVID-19 Critically Ill Patient Care](#)
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Drop-off site for PPE donations

Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes-Jewish Hospital are collecting PPE to help frontline health-care workers. Needed items include: N95 masks, surgical (isolation) face masks, eye shields/goggles, examination gloves, contact isolation gowns, nasopharyngeal swabs and disinfectant wipes.

Businesses and individuals can donate by [filling out this form](#). Please indicate the date and time you would like to drop off the items. Donations will be accepted from 8 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at:

Washington University/Barnes-Jewish Hospital Donations
Clayton Avenue Building
4353 Clayton Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63110

Medical students design reusable face shields

Third-year medical students are developing reusable face shields to help protect health-care workers during the coronavirus pandemic. On Tuesday, the first day of an elective class on COVID-19 response, students discussed the shortage of personal protective equipment and felt inspired by a call-to-action from Victoria J. Fraser, MD, the Adolphus Busch Professor of Medicine and head of the Department of Medicine and other WUSM and BJC leaders.

Shortly after class, eight students, led by Katie Jordan, began designing prototype reusable face shields and visiting local businesses for supplies such as plastic sheeting, cushion foam, elastic fabric and weatherproofing seal. Students then tested the face shields on faculty and medical trainees for usability. By Thursday, the students began the process to evaluate mass-producing large numbers of reusable face masks at low cost, funded by the Department of Medicine. “The students jumped right in with enthusiasm, creativity and innovation,” Fraser said. “We are incredibly proud and grateful for their efforts.”



Update about the Visitor Policy

We recognize the importance of family members and friends to our patients. These needs, however, must be balanced against the need to prevent transmission of COVID-19 within our communities and facilities.

This [UPDATED BJH flyer](#) can be provided to patients and visitors to explain the latest policy. Exceptions to the No Visitor Policy at BJH are:

- Obstetric patients may have one designated visitor (such as a partner or birth support person).
- Nursery and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) patients may have two designated visitors, who must remain in the patient room for the duration of the visit.
- Patients who are at end-of-life may have two visitors at a time.
- Patients with behavioral health, developmental delays or altered mental status for whom a family member or caregiver is integral to their care or safety may have one visitor.
- Patients with an appointment in a BJC or WUSM outpatient setting or

procedural area who will not be admitted for overnight stay may have one designated visitor.

Employee parking restrictions lifted

Any employee who is traveling to campus for an intermittent need but does not hold a parking permit may park in an open lot space belonging to the School of Medicine. These spaces are limited but will not require a permit during this period. The campus will suspend ticketing on the noted lots for this short time. Parking in any ADA spot does require an ADA permit and is subject to ticketing if misused. Current parking permit holders should park in assigned parking locations.

For university-wide announcements, visit coronavirus.wustl.edu »

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