

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Over the past several days there have been many changes in the COVID-19 situation in the St Louis region that requires us to make significant changes to our Washington University School of Medicine (WUSM) Student and Occupational Health Office administrative structure, policies and procedures. We need to align the policies, procedures and recommendations to evaluate and manage potential COVID-19 exposures among our faculty, staff and trainees with the BJC occupational health policies. Alignment of WUSM and BJC COVID-19 exposure and management policies is essential to take a medical campus wide approach to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure and COVID-19 disease on campus. Aligning WUSM Student and Occupational health policies with BJC policies is critical to 1) manage employees and trainees who test positive for COVID-19, 2) determine who is exposed and 3) determine when and how healthcare professionals (HCP) who are exposed or test positive for COVID-19 are furloughed and can return to the workplace. Alignment is also essential to reduce variation and provide greater consistency and communication. Common WUSM and BJC COVID-19 policies for students and HCPs will allow us to work more effectively with the St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Missouri and Illinois Health Departments.

Dr. Jennie H. Kwon, Assistant Professor of Infectious Disease in the Department of Medicine, Associate Medical Director for Infection Prevention, Barnes-Jewish Hospital Associate Hospital Epidemiologist, will become the Leader for all COVID-19 related issues for WUSM Student and Occupational Health. Dr. Kwon will work closely with Dr. Hilary Babcock, Professor of Infectious Disease in the Department of Medicine and Medical Director of Infection Prevention for BJC HealthCare, to ensure alignment of all COVID-19 related WUSM and BJC Occupational Health policies. Jennifer Reneau, RN will report to Dr. Kwon for all COVID-19 related matters. Dr. Karen Winters will continue to serve as the Medical Director for all Non-COVID-19 Student and Occupational Health matters. WUSM Student and Occupational Health will report up through Dr. Eva Aagaard, the Carole and Gerome Loeb Distinguished Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Education.

We are going to significantly increase the staff for WUSM Student and Occupational health to better manage the COVID-19 situation. We are also going to create better systems to manage the large volume of calls and emails. Dr. Philip Payne and the I2 faculty and staff are helping to develop new online reporting systems and databases for Student and Occupational Health. This is going to take a little while to operationalize. We need to more quickly screen all the current returning travelers and standardize the approach that was taken with returning travelers over the past couple of weeks. Our goal is to 1) screen HCPs

for symptoms to ensure they DO NOT come to work sick, 2) assess HCPs for significant COVID-19 exposures and high risk travel so they can either be furloughed, or return to work with a mask based on CDC criteria and 3) clear HCPs who have not had significant COVID 19 exposures or high risk travel so they can return to work. We will not furlough HCPs based simply on domestic airline travel. Rather HCPs will be screened and furloughed based on specific travel exposures. We will follow CDC guidance, rapidly changing regional epidemiology, and align WUSM student and Occupational Health screening and policies with BJC occupational health policies. We will push out more regular communication and updates. Operationalizing all of these changes for Student and Occupational Health will take a little while so please be patient as we implement new organizational structures and expand resources. We will go as fast as we can. Thank you for your patience.

Sincerely,

David H. Perlmutter, MD
Executive Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs and Dean