Return to Work Guidance for Healthcare Personnel Exposed to COVID-19 at Work

Purpose:

To provide interim guidance on the decisions regarding when healthcare personnel (HCP) who have potential exposure to patients with COVID-19 in the healthcare setting may return to work. This guidance is based on the current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) based on the known information about COVID-19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposure</th>
<th>Personal Protective Equipment Used</th>
<th>Work Restrictions</th>
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| HCP who had close contact with a patient, visitor, or HCP with confirmed COVID-19 | • HCP not wearing a surgical face mask **AND** eye protection during the encounter  
• HCP not wearing all recommended PPE (i.e., gown, gloves, eye protection, respirator) while performing an aerosol-generating procedure | • Exclude from work for 14 days after last exposure  
• Advise HCP to monitor themselves for fever or **symptoms consistent with COVID-19**  
• All close contacts **must** be offered testing 5 days after exposure or on development of symptoms, whichever is earlier |
| HCP who had close contact with a patient, visitor, or HCP with confirmed COVID-19 | • HCP wearing a surgical face mask **AND** eye protection during the encounter  
• HCP wearing all recommended PPE (i.e., gown, gloves, eye protection, respirator) while performing an aerosol-generating procedure | • **No work restrictions**  
• Advise HCP to monitor themselves for fever or **symptoms consistent with COVID-19**  
• All close contacts **should be** offered testing 5 days after exposure or on development of symptoms, whichever is earlier |
Maintaining appropriate staffing in healthcare facilities is essential to providing a safe work environment for HCP and safe patient care. Healthcare facilities must be prepared for potential staffing shortages and have plans and processes in place to mitigate them, including considerations for permitting HCP to return to work without meeting all return to work criteria above. If an institution is in a critical shortage, they may allow asymptomatic HCP to return to work during their period of quarantine. Of note, any SYMPTOMATIC HCP is not allowed to return.

If an asymptomatic HCP is allowed to return to work as an essential worker during their period of quarantine, all attempts should be made to accommodate them in nonpatient care activities. HCP must monitor their temperatures at least twice per shift as well as maintain PPE and social distancing precautions. Outside of work, all cases must remain in quarantine.

Notes:

1. Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. Until more is known about transmission risks, it is reasonable to consider an exposure of 15 minutes or more as prolonged. However, any duration should be considered prolonged if the exposure occurred during performance of an aerosol generating procedure.
2. Data are limited for the definition of close contact. For this guidance it is defined as: a) being within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 or b) having unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions or excretions of the person with confirmed COVID-19.