

UW Medicine Town Hall FAQ: May 1, 2020

Are we planning for a second wave of COVID-19 in the fall?

In addition to planning for recovery, the Incident Command team is preparing for a possible second surge. This includes careful monitoring of key supplies, resources for testing and plans for deployment of faculty, staff and trainees if that should occur.

Who is required to wear masks?

All healthcare workers in clinical spaces are required to wear masks as are patients and visitors entering these spaces. Masks are strongly encouraged in non-clinical areas but do not need to be worn in private offices or non-clinical workspaces where physical distancing can be consistently maintained.

We will watch how the pattern of infections in our community evolves over the weeks/months ahead to make decisions on when required masking may be relaxed.

Why aren't we using plexiglass barriers?

In many spaces, it is not physically feasible to place these. In general, the goal has been to emphasize the use of masks and physical distancing. Clinical leaders are reviewing clinics and hospital work spaces to increase physical distancing wherever possible and strategize on how to maximize safety of the healthcare team.

Are people supposed to wear their scrubs outside the hospital?

Even before this pandemic, UW Medicine has made it clear that scrubs should not be worn outside of the hospital. This is particularly true as we have a limited supply of scrubs and increased demand from our supplier. It is also important that scrubs worn in the hospital are laundered and not taken out into the public.

Are we going to test staff for asymptomatic disease (with nasopharyngeal swab)?

This is not part of our plan at this time. It would be unrealistic to daily test all staff who are interacting with patients and as exposure could happen at any time outside of work, this would need to be continuously repeated. Instead, we have emphasized the [Infection Prevention Bundle](#) including required masking, handwashing and physical distancing.

When will we have antibody testing for healthcare providers?

A tiered roll-out of optional testing of healthcare workers will happen in the next few weeks. The goal is to do this in a safe, effective way that allows physical distancing and timely discussion of results. We are encouraging all members of our healthcare team to be tested. At this time, we are not extending this testing to family members of employees.

Will we have guidelines for primary care providers about antibody testing of patients particularly in light of recent articles in the Seattle Times and other publications?

Yes. These were published and sent out to UW Medicine community last week. Here are the links for these materials.

COVID-19 Antibody Testing FAQs (For Patients and Providers)

- [Serological Testing Patient FAQs](#)
- [Serological Testing Patient Instructions](#)
- [Serological Testing Provider FAQs](#)

How many patients have tested positive as they were screened as part of inpatient admissions (presumed to be non-COVID-19)?

One patient has tested positive in the last two weeks (data from Harborview and UW Medical Center campuses). This is less than 1% of patients tested.

Will visitation restrictions continue?

For the time being, visitor restrictions will continue though we will work to allow patients with challenging clinical situations to have the support of one person when feasible. End-of-life visits continue to be supported.

Is UW using hydroxychloroquine and/or remdesivir?

UW is enrolling patients in a multi-center randomized trial of hydroxychloroquine. UW was part of the trial for remdesivir and is continuing to use this medication for patients admitted to the hospital.