



Reducing Workplace COVID-19 Exposure – Best Practices

Pharmacies are essential to the health of Michigan State residents, as timely and accurate medication delivery is foundational to the treatment of acute and chronic diseases. Therefore, it is essential that we maintain the health of pharmacy staff so that pharmacies can maintain their operations.

Pharmacies should implement strategies to prevent person to person transmission of infection. It is important that we are mindful of all the ways that the COVID-19 can be unintentionally introduced into the workplace. MPA strongly encourages employers to implement the following best practices to ensure the safety of their employees while serving your patients. We can be mindful and careful about how we can contain and control it to prevent community spread.

- Best Practice Recommendations -

- **Everyone entering the pharmacy should wear a face covering**, regardless of symptoms. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. ☺
- **Ensure employees are protected** from potential exposure. **Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians should always wear a facemask while they are in the pharmacy for source control.** Additionally, PPE like gloves and eye protection should be provided, when appropriate. ☺
- **Place markers** (with painters tape) on the floor leading to the register(s) that are six feet apart to serve as guides for your patients.
- **Regularly clean and disinfect counters.** [Click here](#) for disinfecting information and guidance. ☺
- **Place alcohol-based hand sanitizer next to the checkout window** so people can sanitize their hands after using common items.
- **Avoid touching objects that have been handled by customers.** If transfer of items must occur, pharmacy staff should wash their hands afterwards with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. They should always avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. ☺
- **Minimize anything that can be brought into the pharmacy that has been exposed to the outside** and be mindful of National Institutes of Health (NIH) information of how long COVID-19 can live on different surfaces¹: detectable in aerosols (air) for up to three hours, two to three days on plastic and stainless steel, up to 24 hours on cardboard, up to four hours on copper
- **Manage staff shifts** to decrease potential exposure by decreasing pharmacy hours and/or splitting shifts.
- **Postpone and reschedule delivery of some routine clinical preventive services**, such as adult immunizations, which require face to face encounters. ☺
- **Consider closing the storefront** and only use drive through window to prevent patients from coming into pharmacy. Use signage in the parking lot to encourage drive up use.
- In the absence of a drive through window, **implement curbside pick-up**. Assign selected staff to meet patients by the door to instruct patients to return to their vehicles and call into the pharmacy with their requests.
- **Monitor staff for illness.** Take temperatures once per shift and send them home if they have symptoms of a respiratory infection.
- **Update sick leave policies** to place employees on sick leave if a family member is sick; **develop a post-illness return-to-work procedure**.
- **Know your active standing orders, collaborative practice agreements, and memorandums of understanding.** Know the most up to date timelines on when you may be receiving certain capabilities or products (vaccines, therapeutics, testing).

For up-to-date information on COVID-19 visit www.MichiganPharmacists.org/COVID-19