

**RWJBH MASKING POLICY AND EXTENDED USE OF PPE**

**ISSUED: MARCH 30, 2020**

**ADDENDUM: April 14, 2020**

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves daily, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our team members, patients and the communities we serve is our highest priority. We are continually reviewing and amending our PPE policy, with guidance from the CDC, NJDOH and other NJ hospital systems, to ensure the protection of our staff and patients while responsibly using our supply. The following guidelines not only meet but go above and beyond the CDC's recommendations while providing clarity on our standards for PPE during the COVID-19 crisis. This policy supersedes all previous COVID-19 PPE policies.

<b>Guidelines for use of: <u>SURGICAL MASKS</u></b>	<b>Guidelines for use of: <u>N95 RESPIRATORS</u></b>
<b>CAREGIVERS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having direct interactions with non-COVID-19 patients</li> <li>Caring for non-critically ill COVID-19 positive patients and PUIs</li> <li>Transporting COVID-19 patients</li> <li>Performing tests and/or tasks such as X-ray, EEG, EKG, phlebotomy, housekeeping/cleaning of rooms, etc.</li> <li>Not giving direct patient care in the ED</li> <li>Caring for non-COVID-19 or non-PUIs surgical patients in the OR</li> </ul>	<b>CAREGIVERS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caring for critically ill COVID-19 patients requiring ICU level care</li> <li>Giving direct patient care in the ED</li> <li>Caring for all COVID-19 positive and PUIs, when administering an aerosol-generated procedures such as: intubation/extubation, open suctioning, nebulizer treatments, bipap, Venti-mask, proning, chest PT, CPR, trach collar. *Cover N95 with ear loop surgical mask.</li> <li>L&amp;D nurses during second stage of labor</li> <li>OR staff performing surgery on COVID-19/PUIs</li> </ul>
<b>FOR PATIENTS AND VISITORS:</b> <p>Surgical masks should be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ED patients</li> <li>All COVID+ and PUI patients when health care provider is present in room</li> <li>Patients exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms (respiratory symptoms, GI symptoms, or fever) until further assessed</li> <li>Immunocompromised patients (e.g. transplant patients, oncology patients)</li> <li>Partners of laboring patients</li> <li>Parent of Pediatric/NICU</li> </ul>	<b>FOR PATIENTS AND VISITORS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not to be used</li> </ul>

**ALL OTHERS** not covered in the policy above (including all other patients, visitors and staff) shall wear a mask at all times while in our facilities in the presence of others, in accordance with CDC recommendations for individuals to cover their mouth and nose while around other people in public settings. If not instructed to wear a surgical mask, visitors and patients may wear their own cloth face covering upon arrival to the facility.

The facility will provide a mask deemed to be appropriate for this purpose. These masks are not approved for use on COVID-19 positive patients.

-The protocol includes physical distancing measures at all our facilities.

-Perform hand hygiene immediately before and after touching or adjusting facemask/cloth covering.

#### Recommended PPE

- According to the CDC, the appropriate PPE for health care providers to use during care of a COVID-19 positive patient and PUIs includes: 1) a respirator or mask 2) eye protection 3) gloves and 4) an isolation gown. Surgical masks and N95s must be worn with face shields/goggles to protect eye exposures. Gown and gloves are also required for contact precautions.
- Shoe coverings (aka booties) as well surgical caps are not recommended by the CDC and therefore are not appropriate protective equipment against COVID-19 outside of the perioperative area.

#### Extended Use of Personal Protective Equipment on COVID-19 cohorted units

- **Gloves**
  - Gloves are to be removed between every patient, perform hand hygiene.
- **Gowns**
  - Consideration will be made to extend the use of isolation gowns such that the same gown is worn by the same clinician when interacting with more than one patient in the unit as long as no additional co-infection exists. If gown becomes soiled, it must be removed and discarded.
- **N-95 Respirator or Surgical Mask Extended Use – Refer to Chart- page 1**
  - Health care provider (HCP) may utilize the appropriately fitted respirator (N-95) or surgical mask in the designated COVID-19 cohorted unit with positive patients and/or PUIs for the entire shift.
  - The risk of transmission from respirator or face mask during extended use is very low.
  - If N-95 respirator or face mask is removed during the shift, it must be stored in a designated storage area or kept in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses labeled with the HCP's name for reuse.
  - Discard N-95 respirator when contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients and if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through.

- At the end of your shift your N95 respirator should either be discarded or brought for reprocessing protocol according to your facility's specific process. Surgical masks should be discarded.
- **Eye Protection - Goggles/Face Shield**
  - Eye protection (reusable and disposable) can be worn for **extended/continuous use** in the designated COVID-19 cohorted units (risk of transmission from eye protection and facemasks during extended use is very low).
  - If eye protection is removed during the shift, it must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions (use hospital-approved disinfectant wipe). Place in a clean container or brown paper bag labeled with HCP's name for reuse.
  - Wipe the outside of face shield or goggles with clean water or alcohol to remove residue
  - HCPs should not touch their eye protection. If they touch or adjust their eye protection they must immediately perform hand hygiene, AND HCPs should leave patient care area if they need to remove their eye protection.

**Extended Use of Personal Protective Equipment on a unit which houses both regular medical/surgical patients as well as a few COVID+/PUI's .**

- For non-cohorted units, the following is recommended:
  - The same nurse is assigned to patients that are COVID-19 positive or PUIs.
  - The same N-95/ surgical mask (use chart on page 1) and goggles are used when providing direct patient care to COVID-19 positive patients and PUIs only.
  - Discard when contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients and if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through
  - Masks must be stored appropriately in a designated storage area or kept in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses labeled with the HCP's name for reuse during that shift.
  - Goggles must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions (use hospital-approved disinfectant wipe). Place in a clean container or brown paper bag labeled with HCP's name for reuse.
  - Wipe the outside of face shield or goggles with clean water or alcohol to remove residue
  - Gowns and gloves must be changed between patients and perform proper hand hygiene.
  - At the end of your shift your N95 respirator should either be discarded or brought for reprocessing protocol according to your facility's specific process. Surgical masks should be discarded.

\*As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, there may be additional changes to this policy.

**REFERENCES**

- CDC. February 29, 2020. Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>
- CDC. March 17, 2020. Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of Eye Protection.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/eye-protection.html>
- CDC. March 17, 2020. Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of Facemasks.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>
- CDC. March 17, 2020. Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of Isolation Gowns.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/isolation-gowns.html>
- CDC. April 13, 2020. Interim infection prevention and control recommendations for patients with suspected or confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in health care settings. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>