New FAQs – August 26, 2020

1. If a patient that does not have health insurance calls or comes to the clinic saying they need COVID testing, what are we doing?

From the COVID-19 Response Team:
Individuals are able to access care if needed from AltaMed as they always have been. We discourage individuals from coming to AltaMed specifically just for testing if they have healthcare outside of our organization from which they can receive care. If someone wants to establish care from AltaMed and they meet criteria for testing according to local public health guidelines, we will offer them a test according to standards of care.

2. Now that we have plexiglass for the front office staff, are masks alone sufficient and not a face shield too? The patients are having a difficult time hearing the staff through all the layers.

From the COVID-19 Response Team:
As long as the plexiglass is in between the patients and staff, they can take their eye covering off (face shield or goggles) and just wear their masks. If the patient is peeking around the plexiglass, they need to be directed back behind the plexiglass.

3. Staff screening: This morning an employee's temperature was taken and found to be 101 degrees. She was kept in the lobby, where other staff walk in the building, so they can retake her temperature. She was possibly kept in the lobby for 20-30 minutes and then was sent home because she had a fever. Is this the appropriate process?

From the COVID-19 Response Team:
That is not the appropriate process. Staff that have fevers should be directed outside to contact their managers for further direction.

4. When an employee travels outside of the country, are they supposed to quarantine before returning to work? Also, what is proper PPE when caring for a positive Covid patient? If an employee is wearing gown, gloves, surgical mask, and face shield but no N95 mask and is with patient for 45 minutes, is that considered being exposed?

From the COVID-19 Response Team:
Employees traveling outside of the country should quarantine for 14 days per our workforce management policy. If there is a suspected or confirmed Covid patient, staff should wear N95, face shield, gown, gloves and practicing routine hand hygiene in an isolation room. If a staff member wears only a surgical mask instead of an N95 but all of the other equipment and was not doing any aerosol generating procedures, they are not considered to have had a high-risk exposure. As always, we should be monitoring ourselves daily for signs and symptoms of COVID.

5. I recently purchased my own facemask that meets all necessary requirements. I was informed by a supervisor that I cannot wear it and must wear the ones provided by the company. Can I wear a facemask that, for instance, may have "AltaMed" logo on it?

From the COVID-19 Response Team:
At AltaMed, we recommend that staff wear PPE at work which would be a surgical facemask. We do not recommend that staff wear their own personal cloth mask while at work. While patient facing only PPE may be worn which would be a surgical facemask.