

YNHHS guidance on discharging confirmed COVID19 patients, including back to skilled nursing facilities

Situation: More clarity is required on how to rapidly transition patients recovering from COVID19 who no longer require hospitalization

Background: Patients known or suspected to have COVID-19 may still be contagious despite clinical improvement.

Assessment:

1. Clinical decision-making on appropriateness for patients with COVID-19 to be discharged home or to a nursing facility should focus the patient's ability to convalesce back to their baseline, either at home or in a facility.
2. Clinical teams are encouraged to think creatively with care management to get patients back to their home setting, and only consider a skilled nursing facility when absolutely necessary.
3. Since patients recovering from COVID-19 may still be contagious, clinicians should consider patients' abilities to follow self-isolation instructions after discharge.
4. Patients requiring transition to nursing facilities must undergo testing to determine that they are no longer positive for the SARS-COV2 virus, which causes COVID-19.

Recommendation/Procedure:

1. Patient discharge to home
 - a. Identify if hospital clinical endpoints have been met. If yes:
 - b. Determine if patient requires ongoing self-isolation post-discharge. (see #3 below)
 - c. If patient requires ongoing isolation, assess whether the patient's home situation is compatible with self-isolation.
2. Patient discharge to a nursing facility
 - a. Identify if hospital clinical endpoints have been met. If yes:
 - b. Determine if patient requires ongoing self-isolation post-discharge. (see #3 below)
 - c. If the patient requires ongoing isolation, in collaboration with Care Coordination, determine if the nursing facility can meet isolation needs.
 - d. If the facility cannot meet isolation needs, test the patient for continued presence of SARS-CoV-2.
 - i. If the test is negative, repeat the test 24 hours later.
 - ii. If the second test is negative, the patient may be safely discharged to the nursing facility without need for isolation for COVID-19.
3. Self-isolation after hospital discharge is indicated for patients meeting one or more of the following criteria;
 - a. 7 or fewer days since the onset of illness
 - b. 3 or fewer days since the resolution of fever and respiratory symptoms

References:

1. Interim Guidance for Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>
2. Interim Guidance for Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>
3. Interim Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Nursing Homes, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html>
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/caring-for-yourself-at-home.html>