



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: May 4, 2020

From: Epidemiology and Immunizations Services Branch, Public Health Services

Health Advisory Update #15: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) – Revised Isolation Period, Clinical Symptoms, Resuming Deferred and Preventive Health Care, and CDPH Weekly SNF Infection Prevention Calls

Key Messages

- Based on evidence suggesting a longer duration of viral shedding, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recently extended the time-period for isolation of persons with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) from a minimum of 7 days since symptom onset to 10 days since symptom onset for [hospitalized](#) and [other patients](#). Of note, this also extends [return to work criteria for healthcare workers](#).
- The CDC has also extended the duration of isolation needed for asymptomatic individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and do not subsequently develop symptoms from 7 to 10 days.
- The CDC has expanded the list of symptoms to consider when screening and testing for SARS-CoV-2.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released [Guidance on Resuming California's Deferred and Preventive Health Care](#).
- CDPH is hosting weekly COVID-19 Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Infection Prevention Calls, starting May 7, 2020.

Situation

- To discontinue isolation or transmission-based precautions, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) previously listed both a 'non-test-based strategy' and a 'test-based strategy.' The CDC has [changed the name](#) of the 'non-test-based strategy' to the 'symptom-based strategy' for those with symptoms and the 'time-based strategy' for those without symptoms.
- Based on evidence suggesting a longer duration of viral shedding, the CDC has extended the duration of Transmission-Based Precautions to at least 10 days since symptoms onset for [hospitalized](#) and [other patients](#). This update captures a greater proportion of contagious patients; however, it may not capture everyone and will be revised as additional evidence becomes available. The full symptom-based strategy includes:
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Return to work criteria for [healthcare workers](#) have similarly been modified by the CDC to extend the duration of exclusion from work to at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
- The [time-based strategy](#) for asymptomatic patients who test positive for COVID-19, and continue to remain asymptomatic, now must wait 10 days to be released from isolation after the initial positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.
- There has been no change to the CDC's test-based strategy for discontinuing isolation/return to work, which still requires a combination of resolution of fever, AND improvement of symptoms, AND at least two negative consecutive results from respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart using PCR

testing. Choice of symptom/time-based or test-based strategy is up to the provider or healthcare facility and providers should be aware of reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture when using the test-based strategy.

- The CDC has changed the definition of and expanded the list of [COVID-19 related symptoms](#) to now include cough **OR** shortness of breath **OR at least two** of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. Of note, these new symptoms have been reflected in the CDC's updated evaluation and testing [guidance](#) to encourage clinicians to consider testing patients when presenting with respective symptoms.
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH) also recently updated their testing guidance which can be found [here](#). As noted in the [County of San Diego testing priorities in CAHAN #13 Expansion of COVID-19 Testing](#), providers should consider federal, state, and local guidance as well as available testing-related materials, staff, and other resources when formulating their testing strategies.
- CDPH released [Guidance on Resuming California's Deferred and Preventive Health Care](#). Facilities considering resuming services should closely review this guidance.
- Lastly, beginning May 7, 2020, the CDPH will be hosting weekly skilled nursing facility (SNF) Infection Prevention Calls to discuss Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) updates.

Actions Requested

1. **Be Aware of CDC's Extended Duration of Isolation of Persons with COVID-19.**

- Isolation for persons with COVID-19 should be extended to at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms (or initial positive test for those without symptoms).
- **Symptomatic** patients with presumed or confirmed COVID-19 can be released from isolation when the following criteria have been met:
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
 - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
 - **At least 10 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- **Asymptomatic** persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 may be released from isolation, barring the development of symptoms, 10 days after the initial positive PCR test.
- For those with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, providers should continue to share the [Public Health Officer Isolation Order](#), requiring that individuals must self-isolate immediately. In addition, providers should advise patients to follow [home isolation guidelines](#) and to provide all their close contacts with [home quarantine guidelines](#). When patients cannot contact their close contacts, providers should work with their next of kin or others to do so. These resources are available in multiple languages [here](#).
- If molecular (PCR) testing resources are available, clinicians are encouraged to test symptomatic patients, particularly those in highest priority groups or those at higher risk for severe disease, see the [County of San Diego testing priorities in CAHAN #13](#), Expansion of COVID-19 Testing.

2. **Healthcare Facilities Should Update Return to Work Protocols.**

- Facilities should update their Return to work criteria for healthcare workers as those have been modified by the CDC to extend the duration of exclusion from work to at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared. For additional information, see CDC [Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19](#).

3. Healthcare Facilities and Providers Should Integrate Updated COVID-19 Symptoms into Screening and Testing Criteria

- The CDC definition of and expanded the list of [COVID-19 related symptoms](#) should be used to expand screening and testing criteria.

4. Healthcare Facilities Considering Resuming Services Should Review CDPH Guidance

- Facilities considering resuming services should review CDPH [Guidance on Resuming California's Deferred and Preventive Health Care](#).

5. SNF Infection Prevention Staff Should Participate on CDPH SNF Weekly Teleconference Calls.

- The teleconference calls will be held:
 - Time: Thursdays, 12:00 P.M. – 1:00 P.M.
 - Dial-in: 1-877-226-8163
 - Access Code: 513711
- CDPH's All Facilities Letter is available on the following link:
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-50.aspx>

Resources and Requests

- County of San Diego
 - Enroll in the [Medical Reserve Corps](#) and the [California Health Corps](#) to be notified about volunteer opportunities.
 - General public inquiries about COVID-19 should be directed to 2-1-1 San Diego or to the County [COVID-19 website](#).
 - Additional COVID-19 related information and resources can be found on the [Health Professionals Sector Page](#) on the County [COVID-19 website](#).
- CDC COVID-19 Healthcare Professionals website
 - [Information for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- CDPH COVID-19 website
 - Visit the [CDPH COVID-19 website](#) for state information, including [guidance documents](#) and [All Facilities Letters](#).

Thank you for your participation.

CAHAN San Diego

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County COVID-19 Website: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/coronavirus.html>

County Health Professionals Website, [click here](#).