

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
VDH Call with Long-Term Care Providers
March 10, 2020 12:00-12:30pm**

PLEASE NOTE – this information may be superseded by subsequent guidance; always check <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus> for updated information.

Questions from Long-Term Care Providers

Answers provided by VDH Commissioner Dr. Mark Levine.

Question: Request for guidance regarding N95 masks.

- Answer: This guidance is evolving. Recommendation to stay aware of recommendations from CDC on this topic.

Question: Is the expectation that residents with mild symptoms of confirmed Coronavirus be quarantined in our LTC facilities?

- Answer: Yes, as mild symptoms permit. Acknowledgement that the symptoms may present in a resident in such a way that emergency department assessment and/ or hospitalization might be indicated.

Question: If/ when PPE in our facility runs out, who has supplies?

- Answer: Unlikely Red Cross will have supplies. There is a small state stockpile. Some of this supply will go to hospitals, which does leave some for LTC facilities if emergency is arising. Notify VDH if this is an issue.

Question: Is there a risk to sending individuals to large group events? For example, the Vermont Disability Awareness event has been cancelled.

- Answer: There is concern with group gatherings if it is an indoor event with large crowd, especially for individuals with underlying medical conditions.

Question: Regarding the recently distributed screening protocol, is there a recommendation for facilities to keep records of the screening forms?

- Answer: Per Suzanne Leavitt, follow own facility policies as these are for visitors and not residents.

Question: For example, what if there is a resident with Dementia or Alzheimer's who is ambulatory and confirmed to have the virus but with mild symptoms. The mild symptoms may not require hospitalization, but this would be difficult to contain / confine due to resident's inability to understand precautions.

- Answer: With mild symptoms and confirmation of the virus; the person has to be out of circulation from others. Results of test turnaround is less than 24 hours. Facilities will know if you need to restrict the individuals' movement quickly. Acknowledged difficulties with management of behavior for residents with certain cognitive conditions.

Question: If we suspect a positive case in the building, how do we get someone tested?

- Answer: It depends, University of Vermont Health Network has identified locations to get testing done. Independent practitioners will have protocols for where people go. It may be a centralized facility, or it may be to a hospital. There could be an option to test in-house for a facility. Depends on location.

Question: We have clients with mental health conditions, who also have chronic respiratory conditions and present with baseline respiratory symptoms. How should we be trying to manage people who are not restricted in any way in the community?

- Answer: Any fever would be meaningful, any change in cough, sputum, monitor for change and onset of shortness of breath. Really know your clients and observe them. Look for subtle changes in condition. Take temperature and watch for fever. Take temperatures once or twice a day for people who have a chronic respiratory condition. Watch for 38C temp.

Question: What is the notification process is someone has a positive test?

- Answer: The State Health Department lab notifies individuals of positive tests. CDC will know due to confirmation. Patient will rapidly hear from VDH public health professionals.

Request from Suzanne Leavitt for licensed facilities to notify the Division of Licensing and Protection if there is a resident or staff member testing positive. Want to ensure DLP nurse surveyors are not unnecessarily entering these facilities.

Question: Is the State Health Department providing guidance to health care workers following illness? Any test recommendations?

- Answer: Stay alert to VDH health advisory notices. Follow return to work recommendations and clinical judgement of PCP (such as with common colds, season flu for example).

Request from Dr. Levine to provide feedback on implementation of screening guidelines.

Addition 3/11/2020.

Suggestion for LTC facilities to request contact information for all visitors in case it is necessary to get in touch with them because they came into contact with someone who later tests positive.

3/11/2020

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & UPDATES – Please visit the Vermont Health Department’s, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention OR the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living’s website at:

- [Vermont Health Department Stay Informed; Current Status in Vermont](https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus)
(<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Coronavirus Disease Information Page](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)
- [Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living Novel Coronavirus Information Page](https://dail.vermont.gov/novel-coronavirus-information)
(<https://dail.vermont.gov/novel-coronavirus-information>)