

## COVID-19 Update

For more information, visit the Hub @ [internal.bmc.org](https://internal.bmc.org)



Dear Colleagues,

Keeping our staff members and our community safe is our highest priority. Please note the following updates on policies and guidelines related to COVID-19, including a new designated email address for employee health and safety questions related to the virus, as well as travel policy updates.

Please continue to check [the Hub](#) for the most up-to-date information, including resources available for staff.

### Employee Health and Safety: New Designated Email Address for COVID-19

- The Working Well Clinic has established an [email address \(Covid19WWC@bmc.org\)](mailto:Covid19WWC@bmc.org).
- Staff should use this email address to report symptoms of and possible exposure to COVID-19, so the Working Well Clinic can assess your risk and recommend next steps.
- Email [Covid19WWC@bmc.org](mailto:Covid19WWC@bmc.org) for questions related to your health and safety such as travel, exposure, and staying home/self-isolation or when to return to work.

### Travel Policy Updates

BMC has updated our policy on business travel. These changes are effective today, Monday, March 9.

- We are suspending all business travel for BMC Health System employees for the next 60 days.
  - This includes all conferences, locally, domestically or internationally. Any business-related costs associated with conference travel already planned will be incurred by BMC Health System.
- As an additional precaution to ensure the health of our employees and patients, we continue to strongly encourage that you avoid any personal travel outside of the United States during this time.
- Those who choose to visit or travel through countries on the [CDC restricted countries list](#) must self-isolate for 14 days upon return to the United States, as per our [travel policy](#) (updated 3/9/20). The total time of vacation and isolation must be approved by your manager prior to travel. This self-isolation period will go unpaid, although earned time can be used if available. Contact the Working Well Clinic for more information on self-reporting.

### Updated Conservation Policy for PPE

In order to ensure that we are able to protect our staff and provide safe care for all patients, we need to work together to conserve our personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 respirators, surgical masks and precaution gowns. Conservation does not mean that we put our health care workers at risk or that we decrease the quality of care for our patients, it means that we are strategic about how we use the available PPE and anticipate shortfalls in supply.

As a reminder, only take and/or use the supplies you need to protect yourself while providing direct patient care here at BMC. Taking excess supplies can put staff and patients at risk.

Effective today, March 9, the following protocols have been put in place:

Patients under airborne isolation (for which providers must use N95 respirators):

- Limit personnel entering the room to only those necessary for the care of the patient.
- Health care workers who have not been fit tested may not enter isolation rooms.
- N95 respirators should be re-used for patients with TB in airborne isolation until/unless they become ripped, soiled or cannot maintain a tight fit.
- N-95 re are single use for staff caring for patients who are positive or under investigation for COVID-19.

Patients under other forms of isolation, including droplet and contact:

- Limit personnel entering the room to only those necessary for the care of the patient.
- Limit the assignment of students (medical, nursing and across the health professions) to direct care of patients on droplet or contact

For all care activities, bundle care if possible in negative pressure rooms:

- Think strategically about all the activities required. For example, if medications are to be administered, plan to perform additional activities, such as vital signs, during the same interaction, to minimize the number of entry and exits (and thus changes in PPE).

As of March 5, we have suspended routine fit-testing.

- Fit-testing and training will be limited to those who will care for patients under Airborne Infection Isolation, including those treating potential COVID-19 patients.

#### **COVID-19 Related Epic Updates**

- There have been a number of updates to Epic to help with the screening, triage, testing and tracking of patients during the COVID-19 outbreak. Please review the full list of changes [here](#), or in the email sent March 9 by Rebecca Grochow Mishuris, MD, MS, MPH, Associate Chief Medical Information Officer.
- There will be more updates to come as we develop further tools, and they will be available on the [eMERGE page on the Hub](#).