

# Office of the Medical Director

*Excellence, Compassion, Partnership, Integrity*

CoVID-19 Update – 3.27.2020

Visit <http://www.regionsems.com/covid-19> for additional resources

## Current State

- We have moved into a contingency phase of care as we have begun altering our day-to-day operations. At this time however, we are still responding to all calls and treating/transporting appropriately. Please review the Crisis Standards of Care documents on our website for details on the framework approved by Minnesota EMS physicians to familiarize yourself with our strategies.
- We have not yet seen an overwhelming spike in cases here in Minnesota or Western Wisconsin. This is probably still 3-4 weeks out based on best estimates.
- Regions Hospital has modified some workflows:
  - Trauma team activations will be altered. Please provide a reason for TTA with radio report so the trauma team can triage. *Some TTA requests will be downgraded* to help limit the number of people in the room.
  - CoVID-19 suspected patients will be treated preferably in rooms A11, A12, C1, and C2 if available due to negative airflow capabilities. This may include cardiac arrests and trauma team activations.

## Protect Yourself

- Limit the number of providers involved in patient care. Many encounters only need one provider.
- Whenever possible ask the patient to meet you at the front door to avoid entering the house/facility.
- No nebulizers in the ambulance!!! If absolutely needed, administer treatments outside of the ambulance.
- In-line viral respiratory filters should be used with nebulizers and airway devices if available.
- Maintain 6 feet of separation from the patient except for hands-on exams or procedures.
- First responders should perform an initial size-up through a window or from the door if possible and stage for EMS if the patient's mental status and respiratory effort are adequate.
- If the patient requires transport but is not likely to require close monitoring, consider transporting in the back of the ambulance alone without a provider (MN only – while EMS statutes are suspended).
- Homemade masks are not considered PPE and should not be assumed to offer any protection.

## Protect Others

- No riders in the ambulance unless the patient absolutely requires a guardian or support person.
- Practice social distancing as much as possible. Avoid gathering in ambulance vestibules and be mindful of where you are doffing and disposing of your PPE to limit exposure to other crews and patients.
- *Cardiac arrests should not be transported* except in specific circumstances (such as ECMO).
- PCR signatures are optional. Document "unable to sign" and list CoVID-19 pandemic as the reason.
- Hospitals are screening *EVERYONE* who arrives, including EMS and law enforcement.

### Conserve Resources

- *PPE supplies are critically limited.* Conserve the N-95 masks unless absolutely needed – specifically for aerosol-generating procedures (nebulizers, CPAP, suctioning, BVM use, advanced airway intervention).
- Masks may be re-used throughout a shift unless damaged or visibly soiled.
- Encourage non-transport or alternative transport options if the patient is stable, in no distress, has no confounding medical issues, and is only seeking evaluation for CoVID-19 related symptoms.
- Contact medical control (MRCC) if needed to assist with transport decisions.
- In order to minimize reports there is no need to call in MRCC report for routine low-risk non-transports.
- Use radios for communication as cell phone networks have become overloaded and unreliable.

### Exposures and Testing

- CoVID-19 testing is limited – most patients will not be tested or hospitalized unless absolutely necessary.
- Screen asymptomatic staff by checking temperatures at least every 12 hours. If a fever is detected, contact your occupational medicine clinic or follow the instructions in the Symptomatic First Responder document posted on our website: <http://www.regionsems.com/covid-19>
- There is no need to self-quarantine if you are exposed to a possible CoVID-19 patient, *AS LONG AS* appropriate PPE was used.
- Testing of *symptomatic* public safety professionals is available. More information is available online: <http://www.regionsems.com/covid-19>.

### Other Updates

- Please send questions to [RegionsEMS@HealthPartners.com](mailto:RegionsEMS@HealthPartners.com)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are posted on our website
- These are stressful times. Make sure to take care of your own well-being and mental health...  
<https://www.google.com/search?q=covid+memes>

### Daily Trivia Question

Where does the term "quarantine" come from?

Watch for Monday's video to get the answer! If you think you know, email your guess to [RegionsEMS@HealthPartners.com](mailto:RegionsEMS@HealthPartners.com). We'll give a shout out to the smartest among us.