

Suspension of weekly COVID-19 testing for individuals exempted from COVID-19 vaccination

S: Suspension of surveillance SARS-CoV-2 testing for unvaccinated YNHHS staff

B: Unvaccinated staff were historically at a higher risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection than vaccinated staff and have been required to undergo weekly asymptomatic surveillance testing. Newer SARS-CoV-2 variants now predominant in the community are better able to bypass vaccine-induced immunity.

A: Vaccination has previously served as protection against acquiring SARS-CoV-2 infection. Recent SARS-CoV-2 omicron subvariants, including BA.4 and BA.5, now make up a majority of strains in the community and are able to substantially bypass the protection afforded by prior vaccination. The diminished efficacy of vaccines in preventing infection and transmission limit the benefits of continued surveillance testing in unvaccinated staff. Vaccination continues to provide strong protection against severe disease, including hospitalization and death, and should be encouraged.

R:

- Suspend asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 testing in unvaccinated staff who have an approved exemption
- Suspension does not apply to YNHHS staff working in skilled nursing facilities, where due to CMS requirements, weekly testing is still required
- Infection Prevention & Occupational Health teams will continue monitoring vaccine efficacy and community prevalence to determine if reinstatement is needed in the future
- Unvaccinated staff must continue to wear facemasks and practice social distancing around others