May 19, 2021

S:  Update to YNHHS Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

B:  The appropriate use of PPE remains critical to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19. SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted from infected persons whether they are symptomatic or not. The risk for transmission is markedly diminished by high rates of vaccination, the decreasing prevalence of COVID and the continued safe behaviors such as physical distancing, testing of symptomatic persons, the quarantine for persons exposed and the isolation of persons who may be contagious.

A:  Recognizing this recent change in risk, the CDC updated general guidance on the use of face masks. YNHHS is updating the PPE policy dated March 1, 2021.

R:
1.  Masks are to be worn by;
   a.  all persons in areas where patients, family or visitors may be present,
   b.  all persons on shared transportation (e.g., shuttle buses, elevators), and
   c.  staff not fully vaccinated\(^1\) who are around others indoors or outdoors.

2.  Mask use is not required for persons who have been fully vaccinated:
   a.  when outdoors at a YNHHS site,
   b.  when indoors in areas where there are no patients, family or visitors (e.g., offices, non-clinical workspaces, breakrooms, meeting rooms, charting areas).

3.  Persons may choose to continue to wear a face mask even when not required.

4.  In alignment with YNHHS values, it is appropriate to ask others if they are comfortable with you removing your mask as some staff are not vaccinated or may have health conditions placing them at high risk. Likewise, staff members’ request to have others wear a face masks in their presence should be respected.

5.  Efforts to ensure physical distancing are to be maintained.

6.  Due to the decreased rate of COVID in the community, the use of eye protection is not currently recommended for all patient interactions. Eye protection use remains necessary for the care of patients in COVID isolation and when there is a risk for a splash, as part of standard precautions.

\(^1\) Fully vaccinated is defined as a person who is 2 or more weeks post-receipt of the COVID vaccination series.