YNHHS/YM PPE Policy for COVID-19 Prevention

This document supersedes other COVID-19 respiratory protection and PPE guidance.
Effective date: September 30, 2020

**Background:** The proper use of PPE in conjunction with infection prevention behaviors such as physical barriers, social distancing and hand hygiene prevents the transmission of COVID-19.

**Scope:** These guidelines apply to all settings. This PPE policy does not provide comprehensive guidance for COVID testing or patient/work flows to ensure social distancing.

**Policy:**

1. **Patients and visitors:**
   a. All must wear face masks when in any healthcare facility.
   b. Face masks are to cover both the nose and mouth. A tightly fitting cloth mask without an exhalation valve is acceptable. Those that arrive without an appropriate face covering are to be provided a mask.
   a. In the ambulatory setting, patients and visitors will wear a face mask at all times.
   b. For inpatients, patients will wear a face mask when hands on care is being provided, when in close proximity with any other person in their inpatient room, when outside their room (e.g., transport, ambulating) or other scenarios where appropriate social distancing may not be feasible.
      i. Patients are to be provided with a face mask and are to reuse their mask for up to a week. Masks are to be stored in a labeled paper bag at their bedside.
      ii. Staff are to remind patients to wear the mask and assist as needed.

2. **Clinicians and staff in patient care** areas are to wear PPE provided by the institution.

3. **Staff screeners:**
   a. Staff screeners at entrances across all sites of care (inpatient and outpatient) are to wear a face mask and eye protection.
   b. Hand hygiene shall be performed in accordance with YNHHS policy, “Hand Hygiene Compliance”.

4. **Standard precautions:**
   a. Standard precautions apply to all patient care.
   b. If splashing or exposure to blood or body fluids is anticipated a gown, gloves, masks and/or eye protection is to be worn.

5. **Facemasks:**
   a. Should be worn by all clinicians, staff, and volunteers when in any healthcare facility.
   b. Face coverings are to cover both the nose and mouth.
   c. Facility provided face masks are to be worn in clinical areas.
   d. Cloth masks may be worn in non-clinical and administrative areas. Masks with exhalation valves are prohibited.
   e. Face masks are intended for extended use:
      III. Clinicians and staff whose job primarily involves direct patient contact for most of the day will be issued a facemask at the beginning of each shift.
      IV. Rotating support staff or staff whose job involves less frequent direct patient contact will be issued a facemask on a weekly basis.
6. **Eye protection:**
   a. Eye protection is to be worn as a standard precaution for all patient care activities when the patient is unable to wear a mask.
   b. Eye protection includes face shields, goggles or safety glasses. Prescription eye glasses are not considered PPE.
   c. When a N95 respirator is used, the preferred eye protection is a face shield to protect the respirator from fluid spray/splash.
   d. Eye protection is intended for extended use and reuse. Appropriate cleaning protocols should be adhered to.

7. **Respirators:**
   a. For sterile procedures where respirator use is required, staff working in the sterile field shall not use respiratory PPE containing an exhalation valve (such as valved N95 or elastomeric respirators). If a non-valved respirator is unavailable, a face mask is to be worn over the exhalation valve for the sterile procedure. If the respirator does not have a fluid resistant rating, a surgical grade mask is to be worn over the respirator.
   b. Respirators are intended for extended use. Clinicians and staff whose job primarily involves direct patient contact for most of the day will be issued a respirator the beginning of each shift.
   c. If a respirator or face mask is damaged or soiled before the end of the assigned time period, it is to be discarded. Respirators are to be placed in the designated bins for reprocessing, when available.
   d. Cosmetics are NOT to be worn on areas of the face which contact the respirator.
   e. Per Connecticut Department of Public Health guidance, in “crisis”, a non-fit tested respirator may be used if a fit tested respirator is not available.

8. **Operating Room/Sterile Procedures / Procedural Areas:**
   a. During intubation and extubation, only essential staff shall be present in the room. All staff in the room are to wear a fit tested respirator or elastomeric and eye protection or PAPR during intubation/extubation.
   b. Surgical masks (ASTM rated 2 or 3) or respirator (refer to Table 1) plus eye protection, gowns and gloves are to be worn by those at risk for splash exposure. Others who are away from the operative / procedural field and not at risk for splash exposure can wear other institution-provided face masks or respirators as indicated.
   c. Elastomeric respirators with an exhalation valve are to be covered with a mask; surgical rated mask if at risk for splash.
   d. If a PAPR is worn, a face mask is also to be worn under it.
   e. Sterile gowns are not be used for non-sterile procedures, such as intubation and extubation.
   f. If a patient’s COVID status is unknown and an urgent procedure cannot be delayed, follow COVID+/PUI guidance for PPE selection. The OR location for patient care is to be determined by the attending surgeon and anesthesiologist, with support from Infection Prevention, if requested.

9. For care of a **COVID negative/non-PUI patients:**
   a. Face masks, faceshield / goggles and standard precautions are appropriate for routine care.
   b. A fit tested respirator, elastomeric respirator, or PAPR plus eye protection is recommended for high risk aerosol generating procedures such as bronchoscopy, intubation, extubation and select dental procedures.
   c. See Table 1 for details.

10. For care of a **COVID + patient/PUI:**
    a. A non-fit tested respirator with a face shield is to be used, in addition to gown and gloves. Once care is complete, staff can either continue to wear a respirator or change to a face mask.
    b. For high risk aerosol generating procedures, a fit tested N95 respirator or elastomeric respirator plus eye protection or PAPR is to be used when performing an aerosol generating procedure (AGP).
    c. See Table 1 for details.

**NOTE:** For CDC reference, please refer to attached link: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html)
**Table 1. PPE Requirements by Clinical Indication**

ALL PATIENT CONTACT REQUIRES THAT BOTH CLINICAL STAFF AND PATIENT ARE WEARING A FACE MASK. EYE PROTECTION IS TO BE WORN FOR ALL PATIENT CARE ACTIVITIES WHEN THE PATIENT IS UNABLE TO WEAR A MASK.

**ADDITIONAL PPE REQUIREMENTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Indication</th>
<th>COVID+ / PUI *</th>
<th>COVID Negative / Not Suspected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routine Care</td>
<td>AGP / High Risk AGP</td>
<td>Routine Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE Requirement</td>
<td>Respirator (non-fit tested) Face shield/goggles Gown /Gloves</td>
<td>Respirator (fit tested) Face shield/goggles Gown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Care Examples       | • PUI-Patients awaiting results of COVID testing  
                        • Positive COVID test  
                        • High suspicion of COVID despite negative test  
                        • High flow nasal cannula  
                        • High flow/closed face mask (e.g., Venturi mask, cold steam, aerosol) with O2 flow rates <15 l/min  
                        • Non-invasive ventilation (BIPAP/CPAP)  
                        • Sputum induction  
                        • Nebulized medications  
                        • Tracheostomy inner cannula changes  
                        • Open suctioning  
                        • CPR  
                        • Bag mask ventilation  
                        • Intubation  
                        • Extubation  
                        • Bronchoscopy  
                        • Dysphagia evaluation  
                        • Pulmonary function testing  
                        • Cardiac stress test | • Supplemental Oxygen  
                        • Non-invasive ventilation (BIPAP/CPAP)  
                        • Nebulized medications  
                        • Routine trach care  
                        • Open suctioning  
                        • PT/OT  
                        • Exhaled nitric oxide  
                        • Second stage of labor  
                        • Transpleural procedures without significant risk of a pressurized air leak  
                        • Any other surgery, including: pain, urologic, laparoscopic, cardiac  
                        • Sputum induction  
                        • Placement of feeding or gastric tube (e.g., NG, OG, PEG)  
                        • PFT  
                        • Dental exams, fluoride, X-rays  
                        • Dysphagia evaluation  
                        • Speech Therapy  
                        • Cardiac rehab/stress test  
                        • GI Endoscopy, TEE & other procedures where air is instilled into the GI tract  
                        • Procedures entering the mouth, sinuses, or oronasopharynx  
                        • Procedures where pressurized air from the pleural space escapes into the environment  
                        • Perioperative care of the surgical airway (through day 7 post-op) | • Intubation  
                        • Extubation  
                        • CPR  
                        • Bag mask ventilation  
                        • Bronchoscopy  
                        • Dental procedures (e.g., dental cleansings, drilling, extractions) |
Table 2. PPE for Respiratory Specimen Sample Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nasopharyngeal (staff obtained)</th>
<th>Mid-turbinate (patient-obtained; staff &gt;6 feet away)</th>
<th>Anterior Nares</th>
<th>Oropharyngeal</th>
<th>Saliva</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asymptomatic</strong></td>
<td>Non fit tested respirator, eye protection, isolation gown and gloves</td>
<td>Face mask, eye protection, and gloves</td>
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<td>Face mask, eye protection, and gloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symptomatic, PUI</strong> (includes testing for all respiratory viruses and strep throat)</td>
<td>Non fit tested respirator, eye protection, isolation gown and gloves</td>
<td>Non fit tested respirator, eye protection, isolation gown and gloves</td>
<td>Face mask, eye protection, and gloves</td>
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