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| **Developing Cohorts During a Pandemic** | **Subject: Pandemic Plan** |
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| **Effective:** | **Revised:** |

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the facility to continue to prevent and control the spread of any novel infectious pathogens and to protect and treat all residents affected in accordance with regulatory requirements.

The facility will attempt to separate the residents into groups of Negative, Positive, and Unknown cohorts as recommended by NYSDOH and CDC guidelines.

Cohorting is the practice of grouping together patients who are infected with the same organism to confine their care to one area and prevent contact with other residents. Cohorts are created based on clinical diagnosis, microbiologic confirmation when available, epidemiology, and mode of transmission of the infectious agent.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Residents will be cohorted by category: **Negative**, **Positive,** **Unknown** status requiring observation.
2. Residents will be assessed daily for any symptoms of the infectious agent. Symptoms check will include, but is not limited to fever, respiratory symptoms, any symptoms explicit to the specific infectious agent, or any change in condition.
3. If indicated, and when possible, laboratory and/or other testing will be conducted to detect presence of specific infectious agent.
4. The facility will create a designated area/unit for residents who have tested positive for the specific infectious agent.
5. Residents and roommates of residents who are suspected of being infected with the novel infectious agent will be placed on appropriate transmission-based precautions as necessary. If indicated, laboratory and/or other testing will be conducted to detect presence of infectious agent.
6. When feasible, the symptomatic resident will be moved to a private room on the same unit.
7. All Admissions/ Readmissions will have a review of hospital information prior to admission to determine appropriate placement in facility and if adequate infection prevention and treatment needs can be met at the facility.
8. Specific to the novel infectious agent, a screening tool will be done on all prospective admissions and re-admissions by the Admitting Department.
9. Residents who are newly admitted and develop any symptoms associated with the novel infectious agent will be transferred to the dedicated unit upon identification of symptoms.
10. Residents presenting with signs or symptoms of the novel infectious agent will be assessed by an RN and/or PMD.
11. All staff will continue to be actively screened for signs/symptoms associated with the novel infectious agent.
12. Residents and resident representatives will be notified daily of any newly confirmed (positive) cases in the facility as well as any resident deaths related to the infectious agent via the established auto hotline messaging.
13. The facility will continue to promote consistent staff and staff assignment on each unit:

* The staffing coordinator, in conjunction with the DON/RNS, will make every effort to have residents that have been *confirmed* to be infected with the novel infectious agent to be grouped into one assignment.
* Every effort will be made to have residents who are *suspected* of being infected with the novel pathogen to grouped into one assignment.
* Every effort will be made to have residents who are *asymptomatic* to be grouped into one assignment.

1. Residents who are confirmed of being infected with the novel disease will be placed on appropriate transmission-based precautions and have appropriate signage on their room doors. An isolation cart containing necessary PPEs will be placed outside the room for easy accessibility.
2. Should a resident require transfer to another facility/setting, indicate on the Transfer Form the type of infection and type of transmission-based precaution(s) required. Also, relay this information to the transport personnel (e.g. EMTs).

**References**:

CDC. (Updated 2019). 2007 Guidelines for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Health Care Settings. Taken from: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines-H.pdf>

CDC. (4/30/2020). Responding to Coronavirus (Covid-10) in Nursing Homes. Taken from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/nursing-homes-responding.html>

All posted Policies and Procedures are current as of September 15, 2020 and are based on the current knowledge of COVID-19, CDC and NYS DOH guidelines, regulations and NY Executive Orders as they exist.  The Policies and Procedures are subject to amendment in accordance with any change to regulations, guidance, and/or executive orders.