



GREATER NEW YORK HEALTH CARE FACILITIES ASSOCIATION

519 Eighth Avenue, 16th Floor, New York, NY, 10018

Phone: 212-643-2828 Fax: 212-643-2956 www.gnyhcfa.org



Memo 20-14

To: Administrator, DNS, Medical Director, Infection Preventionist and QA Committee

From: Mary Gracey-White RN, Director of Regulatory Compliance

Date: April 23, 2020

Re: NYSDOH Advisory – Discontinuing Transmission Based Precautions

NYSDOH has released an Advisory regarding discontinuing Transmission Based Precautions for patients in hospitals, nursing homes or other congregate settings where vulnerable patients are.

Previous guidance from NYSDOH indicated patients should meet the following conditions:

- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

However, older adults may have longer periods of infectivity and nursing homes are a setting with highly vulnerable residents. This being considered NYSDOH recommends discontinuation of transmission-based precautions for patients with COVID-19 when they meet the following more stringent conditions:

1) **Test-based strategy**: If testing is available to a facility through in-house or commercial means, the following test-based strategy may be considered.

- Lack of fever (greater than and equal to 100.0), without fever-reducing medications; **AND** Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **AND** Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA, from at least two consecutive tests conducted on recommended specimens (nasopharyngeal, nasal and oropharyngeal, or nasal and saliva), collected greater than or equal to 24 hours apart.

- For patients who were asymptomatic at the time of their first positive test and remain asymptomatic, testing for release from isolation may begin a minimum of 7 days from the first positive test.
- Test based strategy is also recommended for immunocompromised patients (including those on immune suppressing medications).

See CDC Testing Guidance for Admitting new residents to Long Term Care attached.

2) Non-test-based strategy:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever (greater than or equal to 100.0) without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND at least **14 days** have passed since symptoms attributed to COVID-19 first appeared.
- For patients who were asymptomatic at the time of their first positive test and remain asymptomatic, AND at least **14 days** have passed since the first positive.
- Using the non-test-based strategy for residents who **remain symptomatic**, such as with a persistent cough, should be: (1) placed in a single room or be cohorted with other recovering residents who had confirmed COVID-19; (2) remain in their room; and (3) wear a facemask when caregivers enter the room.

Please note that the recommendations for discontinuing Transmission Based Precautions also apply to persons suspected of having COVID-19.