

Preparing for Potential Infection in West Virginia Communities

Since February 2020, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health has been following an increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. The Bureau for Public Health monitors Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates, hospital admissions, and other data to determine the potential risk to citizens in West Virginia from the virus.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath

PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION

- Occurs via small droplets from the nose or mouth of the infected person when they cough, sneeze, or exhale.
- Maintain 2 meter (6 ft) distance between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel sick. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

PREVENTION

- Isolating sick and diagnosed individuals.
- Encourage proper handwashing.
- Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.
- Provide education about COVID-19.
- Discourage sharing food, drinks, etc.

EDUCATE RESIDENTS, PERSONNEL AND VISITORS

- Educate and train health care personnel (HCP).
 - * Reinforce sick leave policies. Remind HCP not to report to work when sick.
 - * Reinforce adherence to infection prevention and control measures, including hand-hygiene and selection and use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Have HCP demonstrate competency with putting on and removing PPE.
- Educate both facility-based and consultant personnel (e.g., wound care, podiatry, barber) and volunteers. Including consultants is important because they often provide care in multiple facilities and can be exposed to or serve as a source of pathogen transmission.
- Educate residents and families including:
 - * Information about COVID-19.
 - * Actions the facility is taking to protect them and loved ones, including visitor restrictions.
 - * Actions residents and families can take to protect themselves in the facility.

PROVIDE SUPPLIES FOR RECOMMENDED INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL PRACTICES

- Hand hygiene supplies:
 - * Put alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60% to 95% alcohol in every resident room (ideally both inside and outside of the room) and other care and common areas (e.g., outside dining hall, therapy gym).
 - * Make sure sinks are well-stocked with soap and paper towels for handwashing.
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette:
 - * Have tissues and facemasks available for coughing people.
 - * Consider designating staff to steward those supplies and encourage appropriate use by residents, visitors, and staff.
- Have necessary PPE available in areas where resident care is provided. Put a trash can near the exit inside the resident room to make it easy for staff to discard PPE prior to exiting the room, or before providing care for another resident in the same room. Facilities should supply:
 - * Facemasks
 - * Respirators (if available and the facility has a respiratory protection program with trained, medically cleared, and fit-tested HCP)
 - * Eye protection (i.e., face shield or goggles)
 - * Gowns
 - * Gloves
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection:
 - * Ensure EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectants are available to allow for frequent cleaning of high-touched surfaces and shared resident care equipment.
 - * Refer to List N on the EPA website at: (www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) for EPA registered disinfectants that have qualified for use against SARS-CoV-2.

For additional information on COVID-19, please visit our webpage at: www.coronavirus.wv.gov

Questions and concerns can also be directed to the 24/7, toll-free COVID-19 information hotline at 1-800-887-4304