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Owner: *John Lewis: Chief Business Integration Ofcr*
Policy Area: *COVID-19*
Policy Tag Groups:
Applicability: *UNCHCS - All owned entities (no managed)*

Universal Mask Policy

APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to the following entities (collectively referred to as "UNC Health" in this policy):

✓ UNC Health Care System / UNC Medical Center*	Johnston Health
✓ UNC Physicians Network	Lenoir Memorial Hospital
✓ UNC Physicians Network Group Practices	Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital
✓ Rex Healthcare / Rex Hospital	Nash Healthcare System/Nash Hospitals
✓ Chatham Hospital	Wayne Memorial Hospital
✓ Caldwell Memorial Hospital	
✓ UNC Rockingham Health Care / UNC Rockingham Hospital	

***UNC Medical Center includes all UNC Hospitals' facilities and the clinical patient care programs of the School of Medicine of UNC-Chapel Hill (including UNC Faculty Physicians).**

I. Description

This policy describes a universal face mask policy for all inpatients, outpatients, companions, and visitors to UNC Health facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the companion policy to the employee mask policy, the [Individual Extended Use Mask Policy](#). However, this policy specifically addresses non-UNC Health employees visiting UNC Health facilities. This policy will be implemented at each UNC Health facility at the earliest juncture it can effectively be operationalized.

This policy prevails over any individual entity or departmental policies, as well as any guidance from external organizations as to mask use for the public.

II. Rationale

Asymptomatic carriage rates of the COVID-19 virus are substantial, and by some estimates, the number of persons carrying the virus but asymptomatic might be as high or higher than those infected with the virus who are symptomatic. In order to stem this type of infection, we need to decrease the chance that an

asymptomatic infected person passes on the virus and are therefore implementing a policy of universal use of facemasks for all patients, companions, visitors, and staff entering any facility. In conjunction with its companion policy regarding UNC Health employees, all persons in any UNC Health facility should be masked to decrease the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

III. Policy

All inpatients, clinic patients, companions, visitors, vendors, and other members of the public entering any UNC Health facility are required to wear a facemask, as described below. These masks will be procedure masks (loop or tie masks), provided by UNC Health to the individuals.

A. Outpatient Clinics:

All patients, companions or visitors to any UNC Health clinic facility are subject to the following:

1. All persons will be screened for COVID-19, including assessment of temperature and respiratory symptoms. Individuals assessed as at risk for COVID-19 may be referred to a Respiratory Diagnostic Center or other appropriate medical facility for further evaluation and testing.
2. Patients successfully completing COVID-19 screening and admitted to the building will be given a clean, single use procedure mask and instructed to wear the mask at all times while in the facility. In order to conserve supplies, companions or other visitors will be provided a UNC Health mask only if they have no mask or face covering; for companions, home-made or cloth masks are acceptable. Only one mask per person is permitted.
3. Whenever possible, "Respiratory Etiquette Stations," may be established at or just inside the entry of every facility entrance (including alcohol hand sanitizer, procedure masks and staff to instruct in the placement, wear and use of facemasks).
4. For the duration of the outpatient visit, both the patient and any companion(s) must wear their masks. Patients may discard the mask upon leaving the facility or take them home.
5. Vendors and others entering a UNC Health facility are required to follow the same protocol and wear a mask at all times while on the premises. In order to conserve supplies, vendors and others will be provided a UNC Health mask only if they have no mask or face covering; for vendors, home-made or cloth masks are acceptable. Only one mask per person is permitted.
6. Community physicians entering a UNC Health facility to provide medical services will be issued a UNC Health mask on entry, unless already wearing a medical grade mask.

NOTE: Facemasks and cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

B. Hospital Inpatients:

1. All inpatients, regardless of COVID-19 status, who leave their rooms for any reason are required to wear a procedure mask unless there is a medical reason making mask use infeasible.
2. Patients who are COVID-19 infected or persons under investigation (PUI) must also wear a procedural mask while in their room to minimize droplet dispersion.
3. Extended use protocols will be followed, and a single mask will be provided for a stay of four days

or less, absent special circumstances. Inpatients will be asked to store their procedure mask in a clean brown paper bag or envelope, supplied by the hospital.

4. All inpatients, regardless of COVID-19 status, excluding anyone listed above should wear a mask when anyone enters their room.

IV. Procedure / Implementation

1. Facilities managers are responsible for identifying staff to serve as door monitors and to provide masks and instruction of correct usage.
2. Each facility will create a plan for security and inventory of mask supply, with mask stock to be secured in a locked area when not actively monitored. Site-specific plans for monitoring of adequacy of supply and re-order will be developed by facilities managers.
3. Mask supply will be through that facility's central supply conduit or typical distribution mechanisms, with exceptions addressed on a case-by-case basis.

V. Related Policies

[Individual Extended Use Mask Policy](#)

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
PolicyStat System Site Administrator	Emilie Hendee: HCS Attorney Sr	04/2020
	John Lewis: Chief Business Integration Ofcr [EH]	04/2020

Applicability

Caldwell Memorial Hospital, Chatham Hospital, UNC Health Care System, UNC Medical Center, UNC Physicians Network, UNC Rex Healthcare, UNC Rockingham Health Care