

Camden Clark Medical Center

Policy and/or Procedure

Title: Influenza Restrictions

Effective Date: 06/21/2024

Department: Infection Control

SCOPE: Camden Clark Medical Center

PURPOSE: To protect hospital patients, visitors, staff and the community from the influenza virus during widespread activity or an outbreak.

POLICY: Hospital visitor and employee restrictions will be implemented during influenza season by Infection Control in coordination with the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department Regional Epidemiologist. Unvaccinated HCWs have the potential to acquire or transmit influenza within the hospital setting and will be expected to wear a mask in accordance with the Employee Health Flu Vaccine Program policy.

PROCEDURE:

Surveillance Indicators for Restrictions:

1. Percent of positive tests for influenza rising rapidly to >10%
2. 3 or more influenza admissions to the facility at one time
3. One death due to influenza in the facility
4. Reports of high influenza activity in private associated clinics
5. Influenza activity in the local community reported as widespread

Isolation Precautions: Standard and Droplet Precautions should be taken and continued for the initial 7 days of illness, possibly longer for patients who are severely immunocompromised.

Employees:

Employees should receive annual influenza vaccination to decrease risk of acquiring influenza. During Influenza Restrictions, employees who have not received the influenza vaccine will be subject to wearing a mask in accordance with the Employee Health Flu Vaccine Program policy.

Procedure: Once any of the above listed indicators have been met, the following steps will follow:

1. Limitation of visitors to two per patient.
2. Visitors may be screened for flu-like symptoms or exposure.
3. Visitors who are ill may not visit unless granted permission for compassionate reasons such as end of life care, to be determined on a case-by-case basis with input from the facility Infection Preventionist or designee.
4. Visitors are limited to 12 years and above unless granted permission for compassionate reasons. Younger people have a greater chance of exposure at schools, etc., and have risk of spreading viruses to loved ones, other patients and visitors.
5. Visitors will be given instructions on hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

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6. Visitor restrictions apply to all visitors, including staff members and their families.
7. Visitors of patients with influenza should not be present during aerosol-generating procedures.
8. Notification of hospital Visitor Restrictions will be posted at facility entrances, in waiting areas, on the hospital website, and via public communication forums, e.g. newspaper, radio, television.

Control of an Influenza Outbreak

1. During an influenza epidemic in the community or an influenza outbreak, CCMC workers with flu-like symptoms will be removed from duties and sent home to limit exposure to patients, visitors and coworkers.
2. At the beginning of influenza season and lasting until the end of the season (October through March), CCMC shall implement Influenza Restrictions based on defined guidelines as previously designated under Surveillance Indicators for Restrictions.
3. During an outbreak, influenza patients may be cohorted in a single geographic area within the facility. Infection Control, Patient Placement and Nursing Services will work together to coordinate cohorting efforts.
4. If community and/or nosocomial outbreaks are characterized by high attack rates and severe illness, CCMC may implement:
 - (a) Curtailing or eliminating elective medical and surgical admissions
 - (b) Restricting cardiovascular and pulmonary surgery to emergency cases.

Ongoing Surveillance:

When surveillance data indicate that influenza activity has decreased significantly, Infection Control will discontinue the Influenza Restrictions.

REFERENCES:

Control Of Communicable Diseases Manual, American Public Health Association, 2008
Prevention Strategies for Seasonal Influenza in Healthcare Settings

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcaresettings.htm>

Infection Control Guidance for Healthcare Professionals

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/index.htm>

CROSS REFERENCES: [Influenza Vaccination Program - WYUHS Policy](#)

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