



PHG COVID-19 Update: May 20

Dear Valued Providers

We want to be a resource to our Premier Health Group Independent providers. As planning is underway for expanding access to health care services, we want to provide clinical information and operational updates to help you plan for re-entry.

In addition, we have created a resources page on the [PHG website](#).

Please feel free to contact us directly at **(937) 499-7441** with any questions you might have or if you would like to speak with our Medical Director, Scott Swabb, DO.

Yours sincerely,

Renee George
President, Premier Health Group

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Universal PCR Screening Provider Communication

As our testing/screening capabilities have expanded, **effective May 19th**, we will begin to offer PCR screening of all patients that enter a Premier Health facility as an admission (inpatient or observation). This will begin on Tuesday May 19th. We have previously rolled out this process across Premier Health in our maternity areas, for patients being discharged to congregate care or group facilities, as well as patients coming to the hospitals for certain procedures and/or surgery.

Patients are admitted to a hospital bed through either the Emergency Department, direct transport, or direct admit. Most patients coming through the Emergency Department will be screened there. If the screening is not accomplished in the Emergency Department, it will be completed on the floors early in the admission process by the nursing staff. Some key points to consider:

- For the lab testing turnaround time on Admissions (from the ER or Direct Admits) you can expect a “same day result.” However, specimens swabbed after 7 pm will be resulted before noon the next day (no 3rd shift test runs as this time).
- These patients do **NOT** require admission to a High-Risk Respiratory Unit or placement in isolation pending a test result if they have no symptoms consistent with COVID-19. This is only screening.
- We will continue admission to the High-Risk Respiratory Units based on **symptoms** consistent with COVID-19 prompting a PCR test OR for patients arriving to the hospital with a positive PCR test.
- We will ask that the patient wear a mask until the screening PCR is resulted, unless there is a medical reason that they are not able to wear a mask.
- If the screening PCR is negative, the patient may discontinue wearing a mask.
- All current PPE precautions, guidelines and policies for staff will not change.
- If a patient has a positive PCR screen, the physician will be called and must place an order for droplet and contact isolation AND immediate transfer to the High-Risk Respiratory Unit.

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- If the patient refuses to be screened, their care will continue, and they will be required to wear a mask when anyone enters the room or when they leave their room unless there is a medical reason that they are unable to wear a mask.
 - Visitation guidelines remain unaltered based on a patient's results.
 - **The screening PCR order will be placed by the ED physician if ordered in the ED, and by a nurse under the attending physician's name if ordered on the units. Orders placed by a nurse will appear in your EPIC in-basket for routine co-signature.**
 - If a patient refuses initial screening and changes their mind, they may be screened.
 - Serology testing, regardless of the results, does NOT change the guidelines for patient care and PCR screening.

The following patients will be excluded from screening PCR:

- Transfers from another Premier Health facility if admission PCR screening has been completed
- Patients with a negative PCR screen performed ONLY at a Premier Health site in the last 72 hours
- Patients with confirmed prior COVID-19 infection by PCR more than 14 days ago and currently asymptomatic

[Update on Universal COVID-19 Screening | Resumption of Sleep Studies](#)

We continue to take significant steps in implementing universal screening for COVID-19 across our health system. **Effective Tuesday, May 19**, we will continue to advance this important initiative with **screening for ALL patients who have been (or will be) admitted to our hospitals**. This will apply to patients under observation status as well.

COVID-19 screening is just one of several ways that we are working to ensure the safety both of our providers and employees, in addition to our patients. This will dramatically reduce unintentional spread of the virus, keeping all of us - patients, visitors, and staff - safer.

[Click here to view the key reasons why we are taking these necessary steps toward universal screening and what test names providers should use.](#)

[Updated Signage Files for Visitor Restrictions, Screening & Masking Guidelines](#)

GDAHA has revised the visitor restrictions and mask guidelines that went into effect Tuesday, May 19. A [poster](#) has been created if you would like to print and use at your discretion.