March 9, 2022

The MMS will continue to monitor developments related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the response by state and federal agencies. For current information, including updates from NEJM, visit the dedicated page on the MMS website: massmed.org/covid-19.

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Public Health

**MA DPH updates Comprehensive PPE and COVID-19 Guidance for all Health Care Providers and Organizations**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has updated its *Comprehensive Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance*. The latest guidance replaces all previous Comprehensive PPE guidance from DPH. Three changes have been made in light of the decrease in cases observed in Massachusetts since the last update.

1. Removing the requirement to wear eye protection for all patient care encounters
2. Allowing staff to be able to congregate without facemasks when they are in well-defined areas that are restricted from patient access (e.g., staff meeting rooms, kitchen). If staff who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are present, everyone should wear masks.
3. Removing the ability to reuse respirators

Please note, the deadline for providers to request PPE from the state stockpile has been extended to June 2022.
DPH also updated its *COVID-19 Guidance for all Healthcare Providers and Organizations* to allow for staff to congregate without facemasks in non-clinical space if all staff members present are fully vaccinated. Find the updated guidance [here](#).

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**Biden-Harris administration launches nationwide “Test to Treat” initiative**

The “Test to Treat” initiative will give individuals an important new way to rapidly access free lifesaving treatment for COVID-19. In this program, people will be able to get tested and – if they are positive and treatments are appropriate for them – receive a prescription from a health care provider, and have their prescription filled all in one location. “One-Stop Test to Treat” will be available at hundreds of locations nationwide, including pharmacy-based clinics, federally qualified community health centers (FQHCs), and long-term care facilities. People will also continue to be able to be tested and treated by their own health care providers, who can appropriately prescribe these oral antivirals at locations where they are being distributed.

- Read the [Test to Treat Fact Sheet](#).

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**MA DPH releases 2 important updates to its Clinical Guidance for Therapeutics for Treatment of COVID-19**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s (DPH) latest update to its Clinical Guidance for Therapeutics for Treatment of COVID-19 includes changes based on recent updates to the respective emergency use authorizations (EUA) to the dosing of tixagevimab/cilgavimab (EVUSHELD) for pre-exposure prophylaxis in patients with moderate to severe immunocompromise and to the time period and infusion rate for appropriate administration of sotrovimab. The [updated guidance](#) may be downloaded from the DPH website.
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and CDC COVID-19 vaccine and pregnancy resources

Vaccine hesitancy among pregnant people remains a concern. Whether pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to become pregnant, or planning to get pregnant in the future, vaccination is safe and effective, and is the best way to protect oneself from severe complications associated with COVID-19 infection. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Pregnancy and the COVID-19 Vaccine: Frequently Asked Questions has been updated and is now available in 12 languages. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) website for COVID-19 also has two new resources for individuals, families, and health care professionals:

- ACOG’s first-ever video PSA encouraging all people who are pregnant, thinking about becoming pregnant, and lactating to get vaccinated against COVID-19. This PSA is designed to work on multiple platforms including TV, radio, social media, and websites. You can find the PSA here: www.acog.org/covidvaccine and on ACOG’s Twitter page: @ACOG
- COVID-19 Patient Education Video, which can be shared on clinician websites and via social media. ACOG hopes that this resource helps to support clinicians and partners in counseling their patients to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Get Your Recommended COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy | ACOG