

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Media Guidelines



Audience: Trinity Health Marketing and Communications Teams

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Media Inquiries

The following guidelines are for Ministry communications teams for COVID-19-related media inquiries.

Please send all national media inquiries to [Maria Seyrig](#) or [Bret Gallaway](#), Trinity Health Communications.

Local media guidelines. Following are examples of information to pursue with media:

- Media inquiries/pitches which are oriented toward public health information and include on-camera discussions with your experts. On-camera interviews should be at the media studio or otherwise away from the ministry.
- Promoting Fever Upper Respiratory Infection (FURI) clinics.
- Promoting COVID-19-related Advocacy and Philanthropy efforts.
- Sharing information about services you are stopping or not stopping.
- For media interviews, please provide reference CDC recommendations where applicable.
- **Reminder:** There should be no in-person interviews in facilities per current visitor policies.

Daily Statistics on COVID-19:

- Ministries can report region-wide metrics internally to their leadership teams daily – just as Trinity Health System Office is sharing system-wide information in the Incident Command update.
- If reporters call, ministries can provide region-wide data to reporters in response to inquiries.
- While ministries can share site-specific data in huddles or other person-to-person forums, they should not share site-specific data on paper or digitally. If ministries feel it is necessary to share site-specific data internally on paper or digitally, the PIO should contact [Bret Gallaway](#), SVP, Communications.

Supplies and Shortages:

- **Continue** interviews and pitches regarding preparedness and safety measures. Be sure to 1) reference CDC guidelines and 2) do not give specific numbers related to medical supply stock, PPE, ventilators, etc.

- **Reminder:** For specifics on testing/tests refer to the local area health officials and the CDC who are monitoring COVID-19 stats.
- **Reminder:** If reporters inquire with a specific number for supplies, etc., (Example: I heard you have 5 test kits left) do not confirm the specific number but *do* tell them when the number is incorrect.

General Guidance

- If you have questions regarding inquiries or pitching, please escalate to [Maria Seyrig](#) or [Bret Gallaway](#) for guidance.
- Work with public information officers from your local or state public health offices to ensure alignment with their community media strategy.
- In your messaging, reinforce CDC recommendations that patients should call ahead before coming in to your facility to receive direction, unless it is a life-threatening emergency.

As always, follow established protocols for patient privacy in accordance with HIPAA for all media inquiries.

Current Approved Media Statements

[Confirmed Cases]

Only if asked by media, you may share number of our confirmed cases within individual regions, but not for individual/particular facilities. You may share these numbers with colleagues regularly to ensure region-wide transparency. See guidelines for [Confirmed Cases](#)

[Deaths]

Non-confirmed:

- ❖ We respect the privacy of our [patients/colleagues], and we do not share that information publicly.

If the death has been confirmed publicly by public officials to have occurred at our facility:

- ❖ We are deeply saddened by this loss. We consider all of our [patients/colleagues] and their loved ones as members of the [Trinity Health/Ministry Name] family, and we offer our sincere condolences and prayers for them and their families and friends.

[Personal Protective Equipment Statement]

Safety is a Core Value for Trinity Health and [Ministry name], and we are deeply committed to providing the appropriate level of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all of our colleagues. We continue to work daily with suppliers worldwide and with government agencies to secure additional PPE as we navigate a global supply challenge. To be good stewards of our resources, we purposefully ordered re-usable PPE, including shields and gowns, to avoid some of the supply

issues being faced across our country, and the world, while dealing with this pandemic. We use PPE according to CDC guidelines. [Refer to the CDC for more information.]

[Sick Leave Policy Statement]

Safety is a Core Value for Trinity Health and [Ministry name]. The safety and well-being of our nursing staff, physicians, clinicians, colleagues, patients and communities is paramount. Following CDC guidelines, Trinity Health has adapted sick leave policies in light of the health crisis. We are providing an additional level of protection for our colleagues who must be quarantined due to possible exposure to COVID-19. For up to the first 14 calendar days related to a colleague's need to be quarantined, with or without symptoms at time of quarantine, we will provide paid leave. Colleagues will not need to use hours from their PTO bank during that period for up to 14 days. We are requiring that colleagues who feel sick not come to work for the safety of our patients and colleagues.

Because the virus is now community spread, it may not be possible to definitively determine where a person may have become infected and is not a consideration in our sick leave policies.

[Supply Shortage & Policy Statement]

We are aware of the global shortage of supplies, and we continue to urge local, state, and federal governments to continue to make related stockpiles available. [Ministry Name], along with our region's hospitals, also continue to work closely with suppliers globally to meet this challenge.

Like many other local health care institutions, we are adjusting as the situation evolves. We have made changes to our visitation policies and are allowing many of our non-clinical administrative colleagues to work from home where possible. For more specific information on supplies, we would refer you to county and state health departments.

The best course of action for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms is to self-quarantine, practice proper social distancing, and follow their physician's treatment instructions.

[General]

[Ministry name] is a member of Trinity Health, which is a national health system that communicates regularly with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help protect our communities from infectious diseases. All Trinity Health hospitals, including [ministry name], follow CDC protocols for evaluating and reporting potential cases of COVID-19 and all other infectious diseases.

Suspected cases will go through channels established by the CDC for diagnosis confirmation. Patients who present with symptoms, as outlined by CDC, and have recently traveled or been in close proximity with someone who has traveled to affected areas, are immediately isolated.

More information about COVID-19 is available at the [CDC website](#).

[If asked about a specific patient]

[Ministry name] protects the privacy of our patients and does not comment on their treatment, and that includes commenting on whether or not a person is a patient at our hospital.

[General Prevention Information from the CDC]

The best ways to prevent infection and spread of diseases like COVID-19 include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

More information about COVID-19 is available at the CDC website.

[Testing]

We work closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the American Hospital Association; the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); and Federal, State and local authorities to monitor COVID-19 and coordinate testing protocols and supplies. The best place to learn about the testing process is the CDC.gov web site.

If you have questions, please contact, [Maria Seyrig](#) or [Bret Gallaway](#) Trinity Health Communications.