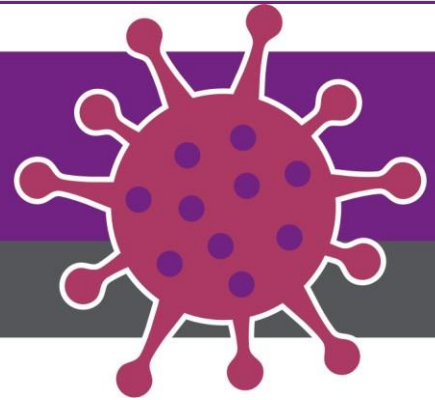


CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Home Care Services of Persons Under Investigation (PUI) for or confirmed COVID-19; Trinity Health At Home (THAH)



Audience: Colleagues and Clinicians providing Home Care Services

Date Issued / Revised: 02/19/2024

Version: 7.0

COVID-19 Response Team Owner: Clinical Operations

Date of Last Review: 02/19/2024

UNIVERSAL: This guide should be used for all COVID patients regardless of Ministry COVID Levels

What's Changed: Updated process for those using EPIC instead of Home Care Home Base. Changed references from tablets to devices.

Purpose and background

This guidance is for colleagues and clinicians who are coordinating the home care and continuing isolation precautions of people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection, including persons under investigation (PUI). This includes patients evaluated who are medically stable and can receive care at home and/or patients who are discharged home following a hospitalization with confirmed COVID-19 infection.

In general, patients with COVID-19 should adhere to home isolation until the risk of secondary transmission is thought to be low. Confirm isolation status with the patient's provider prior to beginning Home Care services. See also [discontinuation-of-isolation-for-a-covid-19-patient.pdf \(trinity-health.org\)](#) System guide.

Information for others in the household of a PUI or person with confirmed COVID-19 is available from the CDC and is available from this link; [If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone | CDC](#)

CDC Recommendations on Suitability of the Residential Setting for Home Care:

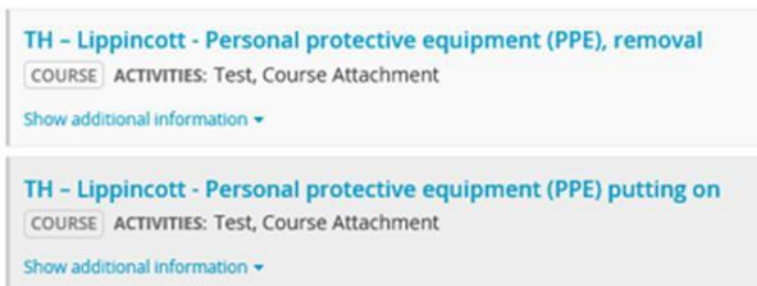
Providers and colleagues are encouraged to consult with state or local health department staff, as needed, to assess whether the residential setting is appropriate for home care. Considerations for care at home include whether:

- The patient is stable enough to receive care at home.
- Appropriate caregivers are available at home.
- There is a separate bedroom where the patient can recover without sharing immediate space with others.
- Resources for access to food and other necessities are available.
- The patient and other household members are capable of adhering to precautions recommended as part of home care or isolation. This includes the ability of the patient to wear a mask when indicated.

- This recommendation is based on what is known about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, paired with emerging evidence from clinical and laboratory studies that show masks reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth.
- The caregiver may also wear a mask (disposable or cloth face covering) when caring for a person who is sick and should practice everyday preventive actions to avoid getting sick.
- If there are household members who, if exposed to the virus while the patient is being treated at home, may be at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Persons at increased risk for severe illness (people >65 years old, those who are immunocompromised or who have chronic heart, lung, or kidney conditions) should not take care of household members who have COVID-19, if possible. See this CDC resource for additional information; [Certain Medical Conditions and Risk for Severe COVID-19 Illness | CDC](#)

Agency Preparation for Home Care Visit:

1. Update/enter Care Type in HCHB (if not already entered), for patients in EPIC- enter an Alert.
2. Enter Point Care Alert: COVID19 (COVID 19 positive or COVID-19 pending)
3. Communicate with designated visiting staff
 - a. Verify staff have appropriate PPE and know how to use them:
 - i. Gloves
 - ii. Face shield/goggles
 - iii. Gown
 - iv. Hand sanitizer
 - v. Disinfectant wipes
 - vi. Respiratory Protection (N95 respirators or equivalent and disposable, medical grade surgical or procedure masks)
 - Refer to PPE Guidebook for required PPE for colleagues to wear during home care visit for PUI or patient with confirmed COVID-19 who is still on isolation precautions; [ppe-guide-booklet.pdf \(trinity-health.org\)](#) . Respirators are required for colleagues providing care. Masks can be provided to the patient and others in the household at the time of home care visit. [Resources can also be found on the COVID-19 Resources \(trinity-health.org\).](#)
 - b. Assign Healthstream module re: PPE to colleagues (if colleague has not already completed the Healthstream modules):



- c. Additional Videos are available that cover proper seal check for N95 and other equivalent respirators. Seal check procedure is part of the fit testing of respirators and the links below provide online video of this procedure and must be viewed prior to first time wearing N95 respirators or equivalent types of respirators.

[How to Perform a User Seal Check with an N95](#)

[Respirator - YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quwzg7Vixsw>

Home Care Agency

During initial welcome call review the following with the patient:

1. The THAH nurse will need to identify an area to don their PPE, e.g. N95 respirator, gown, mask, face shield, gloves. Ask the patient if there is a space outside their home, e.g. porch, for the nurse to put on their PPE.
2. Ask patient/family if they have a container into which the Home Care nurse can discard used PPE.
 - a. If the patient has a waste container instruct them to place this container in the space the patient identified for the nurse to don and doff their PPE, e.g. covered porch due to potential for inclement weather.
3. Make sure the patient and their family is aware that precautions such as wearing masks by the patient and any other persons in the household during the home care visit is required. Explain that these precautions are required by regulations - especially care in the patient's home. Importantly if the Home Care nurse observes non-adherence with precautions the nurse will follow THAH procedure that could include withdrawal from the home and discontinuation of Home Care services.

Visiting Clinician

Verify you have the following PPE as part of your trunk stock

1. Hand sanitizer (preferred) or soap/paper towels
2. Disposable, medical grade surgical/procedure masks
3. Germicidal disinfectant Wipes. See also [alternate-substitute-disinfectant-wipes.pdf \(trinity-health.org\)](https://www.trinity-health.org/alternatesubstitute-disinfectant-wipes.pdf)
4. All the disinfectant wipes identified in the alternative products guide are EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant and included on EPA's "List N" as being effective against SARS-CoV-2.
5. Gown(s)
6. Eye goggles/ full face shield
7. One (1) box of gloves
8. Garbage bags (for outside porch + for materials/supplies used in the home)
9. Alcohol wipes
10. N95 respirators or equivalent, e.g. elastomeric respirator, PAPR
11. Note: may also need a *MRSA* kit (if patient on/to be started on Remote Patient Monitoring —use that for VS)

Clinician Home Care Visit Process

- Call patient before your visit---request that a garbage receptacle be placed by the door the clinician will be entering.
 - This is for you to deposit your PPE upon leaving the pts home. If no garbage receptacle available by door for you to use, place garbage bag by door for you to use when you leave the home.
- Remind patient that they and other members in the household at the time of the visit will need to don a face covering or mask during your visit- procedure mask(if available) or cotton mask.
- Only take in the home items that you need.
 - Suspend use of "nursing" bag – if possible. Recommended to bring disposable equipment only into home (Using a disposable, sealable plastic bag to bring in_necessary equipment). If, "nursing" bag is to be brought into patient's home; all equipment is to be wiped with approved

wipes prior to being returned to bag, and exterior of bag is to be wiped also with approved wipes prior to exiting home/on porch.

- Barrier and hand hygiene items - soap, paper towels, instant hand sanitizer. Extra pairs
 - (2-3) of gloves
 - PPE – N95 respirator, **full face shield, gown, gloves, garbage bags for waste disposal.**
 - *MRSA* kit – only if there is No RPM in the home to use for vitals. Contents of kit stay in patient home and disposed of when we are discharging the patient from our services
 - If RPM (Vivify) kit in the home, use Vivify equipment to take vital signs- push button on vivify tablet to let the Vivify nurse know you are in the home and using Vivify tablet to take pts vital signs.
- Hand hygiene should be performed before putting on and after removing PPE using alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
 - PPE should ideally be put on outside of the home prior to entry into the home.
 - If unable to put on all PPE outside of the home, it is still preferred that face protection (i.e., N95 respirator and eye/face protection) be put on before entering the home. Alert persons within the home that the home care personnel will be entering the home. Once the entry area is clear, enter the home and put on gown and gloves.
 - At completion of the visit, PPE should ideally be removed outside of the home and discarded by placing in external trash can before departing location. Bagged PPE should not be taken from the patient's home and placed in home care personnel's vehicle.
 - If unable to remove all PPE outside of the home, it is still preferred that face protection (i.e., N95 respirator and eye/face protection) be removed after exiting the home. If gown and gloves must be removed in the home identify an open space in the home where gown and gloves can be removed. Exit the home and once outside the home, perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol, remove N95 respirator and eye protection and discard all PPE by placing in external trash can before departing location. Perform hand hygiene again. (CMS, March 10, 2020)

PPE for Care of PUI or Patient with COVID-19: See also [ppe-guide-booklet.pdf \(trinity-health.org\)](https://www.trinity-health.org/ppe-guide-booklet.pdf)

- Respiratory Protection: N95 Respirator or equivalent
 - THAH colleagues must wear an N95 respirator or equivalent, eye protection and gown and gloves when caring for a PUI or patient with confirmed COVID-19 that is under isolation precautions.
 - N95 respirators are disposable and are to be used for the episode of care of the patient and discarded when leaving the patient's home after the visit. There are other types of respirators, e.g., EnviroMask, elastomeric respirator, or PAPR that are reusable. For colleagues using these follow the respirator manufacturer's instructions for use.
 - N95 respirators require fit testing of the colleague on an annual basis. Any change in make or model of respirator requires fit testing for each different make or model of respirator. After donning a seal check must be performed to assure proper seal prior to use for patient care.
- Eye protection: A face shield must be worn when caring for PUI or COVID-19 positive patient.
- Face shields are re-usable and require cleaning - disinfection with a disinfectant wipe. After disinfection store the face shield in a disposable, sealable plastic bag. The face shield is sufficient for protection of colleagues, there is no need to wear goggles/eye protection under this device.
- Other PPE: wear gown and gloves

Competency Training

- Clinicians are to have PPE competency training, and check offs completed prior to caring for PUI or patient with Covid-19 under isolation precautions
- Online videos are available on the N95 respirator seal check procedure.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quwzg7Vixsw>

[How to Perform a User Seal Check with an N95 Respirator - YouTube](#)

Additional Recommendations & Resources

- **Home Care colleagues** - Alert your Clinical Manager and pre-plan provision of and precautions for any aerosol-generating procedures (e.g. nebulizer treatment) the home care patient might need.
- **Hospice colleagues** - Alert your Clinical Manager for individual guidance on patients who have excessive secretions.
- **General Infection Prevention & Control** – Use CDC's Standard Precautions during all care, <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/standard-precautions.html>

Devices

Devices may be brought into the home, but it is recommended that blue-tooth keyboards not be brought /used in the home.

1. Wipe down the device with a prep pad of at least 70% isopropyl alcohol content/or approved wipes/process
2. Wash hands with hand sanitizer

Putting on/taking off PPE given the limitations of home environments

- PPE to be used: N95 respirator, face shield, gown, gloves
- Don PPE prior to entering the home. If unable to put on all of the PPE- respiratory protection (N95 respirator or equivalent), eye protection (face shield) are to be put on before entering the home. Once inside the home and put on gown. and gloves.
- Remove PPE upon exiting the home, placing in garbage bag for disposal in patient's trash.
- Order of removal – gown, gloves, sanitize hands, face shield (clean the face shield using approved wipe, place faceshield in clean, disposable, sealable plastic bag), sanitize hands, remove N95 respirator - lower strap first, then upper strap and then discard. Sanitize hands.
- Put all discarded PPE into the garbage bag – tie off, leave on patient's porch (let them know ahead of time you will be doing this—if you have to take off your PPE in the patient's "entryway"—leave garbage bag in the entryway).
- Perform hand hygiene, after tying off garbage bag.

Patient/family education

Continue to review with the patient and family: Infection control guidance and "Caring for Someone at Home Who is COVID-19 Positive or Suspected of Having COVID-19"---these items are in our THAH admission booklets or available from the field staff.

Resources & References

CMS, Department of health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (March 10, 2020) Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention Concerning Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Home Health Agencies (HHAs). Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Quality, Safety & Oversight Group Ref: QSO-20-18. pp. 1-7

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Interim Guidance for Implementing Home Care of People Not Requiring Hospitalization for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html>

Michigan medicine. COVID-19 Update (March 10, 2020)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidebook for PUIs and COVID-19, [ppe-guide-booklet.pdf \(trinity-health.org\)](#)
[Infection Control: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 \(SARS-CoV-2\) | CDC](#)