

COVID-19 Update

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December 9, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

In order to provide updates on the evolving response and best practices related to the COVID-19 pandemic, AHP will be delivering brief, critical updates on an ongoing basis addressing important highlights and frequently asked questions.

COVID Vaccination for Private Practice Healthcare Workers

As discussed on today's call, the order in which healthcare workers will be granted access to COVID vaccination is prescribed by New York State which is prioritizing those in the ED, ICU and long term care settings. There is no indication from NYS as to when vaccination will be made available to providers in the ambulatory setting. However, AHP is advocating for access for its community providers in our vaccine distribution discussions with URMC, and we will keep you informed as this information is made available.

Return to Play Resources for Providers

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recently released additional guidance on Return to Play related to COVID-19 infection and included additional masking recommendations during sports activities. The full article can be found [here](#).
- Based on this updated guidance, the Golisano Children's Hospital COVID Pediatric Return to Play Workgroup has revised its guidance algorithm for pediatric patients K-12, found [here](#). **Regarding referrals to cardiology, we have confirmed that Pediatric Cardiology will see patients age 17 and younger. Patients 18 and older should be referred to Adult Cardiology.**
- Providers may access a Pediatric Assessment/Release for Return To Play template from the Finger Lakes Schools Reopening Task Force [here](#).

DEADLINE December 18th: NYS COVID-19 Vaccination Administration Program

Practices interested in administering COVID-19 vaccine to their patients when the vaccine becomes available must enroll in the NYSDOH program to be ready to order and receive publicly supplied COVID-19 vaccine and ancillary supplies. **Providers should complete the online COVID-19 vaccine enrollment application by the close of business Friday, December 18, 2020.** Click [here](#) to download the Enrollment Instruction Guide and other resources.

Pre-Procedure COVID Testing

Patients may be sent within five days of the date of their procedure to the four UR Medicine Labs locations listed [here](#). **Patients MUST be provided with a paper requisition to bring with them to the test site.** Patients who do not have a printed order will be turned away. This option will only be available to patients whose procedure will be conducted at a UR Medicine facility or at the office of an AHP-participating specialist.

Office-Based COVID Testing Platform

We have received news from Roche that AHP is no longer eligible to purchase their Liat® testing

platform on behalf of our community providers since this manufacturer is now mandated to limit sales to hospitals. We continue to pursue other options for point-of-care COVID testing, and we will share that information when it is available.

NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines

With increasing prevalence of the disease in our community, providers are now regularly seeing COVID+ patients in the outpatient primary care setting. The National Institutes of Health publishes and frequently updates helpful information for clinicians related to the treatment of COVID-19 which can be accessed [here](#).

Next COVID-19 Response Call: Monday, December 14th

Due to the increasing impact of COVID on the community, AHP's COVID-19 response calls will now be held at **12:15 pm every Monday and Wednesday. Our next COVID-19 Response teleconference will be held at 12:15 pm, Monday, December 14th.** Click on the Zoom link <https://urmc.zoom.us/j/98969184459> or dial in to (669) 900 6833, Meeting ID: 989 6918 4459

Next Behavioral Health Call - Tuesday, December 15th, 12:15 to 1:00 pm

Join the AHP Behavioral Health team as well as members from our pharmacy, care management and social work teams every Tuesday from 12:15 pm – 1:00 pm via Zoom and/or phone for just in-time, virtual consultation support for the behavioral health needs of both your pediatric and adult patients.

Users have two options for participation:

- Phone only: Dial 1 (646) 876-9923, enter Meeting ID 92843450755 and Password 702578
- Computer: Click the link below which has the password embedded <https://urmc.zoom.us/j/92843450755pwd=c2UxS0FJM3ISUXRVRXE5bTIBNmV5dz09>

Please note that December 15 will be the last behavioral health call in 2020. The Tuesday schedule will resume on January 5, 2021.

COVID Testing

Clinical Guidance - Serologic Testing

Primary care providers may consider ordering IgG antibody testing for:

- Individuals who have fully recovered from COVID-19 who are interested in donating convalescent plasma
- Pediatric patients with suspected or confirmed Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- Patients who had illness suggestive of COVID but who were unable to receive PCR testing

Referring patients to UR Labs collection site for phlebotomy may be difficult due to volume of patients able to be accommodated, so community providers are advised to draw in the office and send the tube (SST or standard red top tube) to the lab. For more information about the methodology and performance of UR Labs' testing assay, click [here](#).

Reimbursement Guidance - Serologic Testing

The only patient cohort for whom health insurance will reliably cover serologic testing are those patients who had symptoms consistent with COVID infection but who were unable to receive PCR testing, and thus antibody testing is being used to confirm prior COVID exposure. Provider claims for medically appropriate COVID-19 testing **MUST** be submitted with one of the following codes: CPT® codes U0001, U0002, U0003, U0004, 0202U, 86328, 87635, and/or 86769. These codes may be billed with diagnoses of B97.29, U07.1, Z03.818, and/or Z20.828 when appropriate.

Clinical Guidance: PCR Testing

In addition to testing for symptomatic healthcare and other essential workers and long term care residents, primary care providers may consider testing for the following patients:

- Mild to moderately symptomatic patients
- Patients whose living arrangements are not amenable to isolation (e.g., multi-generational

- household, limitations of physical space, etc.)
- Patients whose employers require evidence of testing either to return to work or to access benefits related to COVID status
- Patients who will be undergoing an aerosolizing procedure (e.g., exercise stress test, endoscopy procedure, transesophageal echocardiography [TEE])
- Pediatric patients with symptoms suggestive of Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- Children with complex health needs whose specialized childcare providers (e.g., Daystar) require testing prior to returning

Antigen Testing

New York State recently updated their recommendations about potential allowances for use of COVID antigen testing in the schema for verifying COVID status. At this time, antigen testing is most helpful in hotspots and areas where a significant increase in testing is required (ZIP codes or school districts with high prevalence of COVID-19). With lower prevalence of COVID-19, the predictive value and risk of false negative testing remains high when using antigen or molecular testing compared with PCR. **A negative COVID antigen test requires a COVID PCR test to definitively remove the patient from isolation for presumed COVID.** Therefore, at this time we do not see a significant utility for antigen testing, but we will continue to update these recommendations as prevalence and recommendations evolve.

There is increasing variability in how rapidly results of PCR tests are being returned based upon where the study is resulted. UR Labs are currently resulting all studies internally with results expected within 72 hours or fewer. We will continue to update on testing availability and processing time as information changes.

We continue to partner with Dr. Mendoza and County Health Department officials on preparedness and response protocols and will convey information as it becomes available.

Thank you for your continued collaboration in this important public health endeavor.

All the best,



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COVID-19 Resource Links

[Golisano Children's Hospital Coronavirus Information for Families](#)

Project Teach: Seven Ways to Support Kids and Teens Through the Coronavirus Pandemic, in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Site](#)

[Monroe County Health Department](#)

[CDC Coronavirus Site](#)

[New York Department of Health Coronavirus site](#)

COVID-19 Online Databases

- [Greater Rochester Area COVID-19 Tracker](#)
- [Monroe County COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
- [NYSDOH COVID-19 Tracker](#)
- [NYS Nursing Home Fatalities](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus Interactive](#)
- [Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard](#)

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