

Patient Safety, Risk, and Quality Update

From Allied World and ECRI

September 2020

The following news and guidance were recently made available without login from ECRI Institute's *Healthcare Risk Control* and related services. If you have any questions, please email Ajay Aggarwal at Ajay.Aggarwal@awac.com.

Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Long-Term Care: Environmental Services

A new white paper, **Environmental Service Policy Considerations to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care**, can be used to develop an environmental service (EVS) policy to help contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus and prevent the spread of COVID-19 disease—a disease that has the potential to pose a significant public health threat to the residents and staff of a long-term care facility. Employers should remain alert regarding changing outbreak conditions within their local area, maintain open communication with local and state public health departments, assess personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 diagnostic testing availability, and implement transmission-based infection prevention measures accordingly.

The white paper discusses disinfection practices and PPE requirements in long-term care, utilizing a red/yellow/green zone cohorting strategy based on infection exposure risks. To demonstrate a cohorting plan, an example is provided in which a red zone represents a COVID-19-positive and/or symptomatic unit; a yellow zone represents an isolation unit; and a green zone represents a unit for people who have not yet been tested but who are thought to be unexposed, who have tested negative, or who have been ill with COVID-19 and have recovered completely. Routine environmental service activities should always follow standard precautions.

News

Are You Looking for Resources to Promote Mask Wearing?

The American Hospital Association has launched its Wear a Mask Campaign with resources and public service announcements that healthcare organizations can use to promote mask wearing among the general public.

[Read the full summary.](#)

Flu Shots and the Need to Protect against a "Twindemic"

Influenza vaccination should be offered by the end of October for all people ages six months or older who do not have contraindications, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says in the August 21, 2020, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

[Read the full summary.](#)

Quality Improvement May Benefit from Collaborative Telementoring Model, Study Says

Quality improvement efforts may benefit from a collaborative telementoring model, according to a study in the August 1, 2020, issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*.

[Read the full summary.](#)

"An Environment of Fear": Microaggressions Take a Toll on Black Women Physicians

Black women physicians, across all specialties, say they experience microaggressions frequently, says an August 11, 2020, *New York Times* article.

[Read the full summary.](#)

How Greatly Did ED Visits Decline at the Start of the Pandemic?

Rates of emergency department (ED) visits rapidly decreased, and rates of hospital admissions rapidly increased, when coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases began to rise locally, according to data from healthcare systems in five states published August 3, 2020, in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

[Read the full summary.](#)

"Invisible" and "Underpaid" on the Frontline: Home Healthcare Study Reveals a Workforce Made More Vulnerable by COVID-19

Home healthcare workers experienced challenges during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that heightened their vulnerability as a workforce, an August 4, 2020, study in *JAMA Internal Medicine* says.

[Read the full summary.](#)

Some Hospitals Using Badge Sensors to Track COVID-19 Cases

A badge sensor system used to track employees' hand hygiene compliance is being used by some hospitals to track coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases within their walls, according to an August 2, 2020, article from CNBC.

[Read the full summary.](#)

Online Training Program Can Help Reduce Unnecessary Pediatric Prescriptions

An online training program for best practices related to antibiotic prescribing and communication led to a 7% reduction in prescriptions for pediatric acute respiratory tract infections, according to a study of 72,723 visits at 19 physician practices, published in the August 2020 issue of *Pediatrics*.

[Read the full summary.](#)