

Checklist to Prepare Your Office for COVID-19

Based on state and federal guidance, your office may currently be closed. However, if your office remains open and/or open for emergencies only, there are a number of steps you need to take to ensure you, your staff, and your patients are safe. COVID-19 transmission is believed to occur mostly through person-to-person via respiratory droplets among close contact. Close contact can occur while caring for patients.

COVID-19 Education

- ✓ Educate staff about COVID-19 and the importance of containing the outbreak.
- ✓ Educate staff on office practices and procedures to minimize the chance of exposure. This may include changing workflows to administer temperature readings prior to a patient's appointment.
- ✓ Train and educate staff with job or task-specific information on preventing transmission.
- ✓ Educate staff on COVID-19 evaluation and next steps if a patient's symptoms are worrisome.
- ✓ Educate staff on how to talk to patients about changes in office procedures.

Office Preparedness

- ✓ Design a COVID-19 office management plan that includes patient workflow, triage, treatment, and design.
- ✓ Provide hand sanitizer, face shields, masks, gloves, and gowns for all caregivers and staff to use when within six feet of patients.
- ✓ Assume that every patient is potentially infected with a pathogen that could be transmitted in a health care setting.
- ✓ Implement policies that promptly alert key staff about suspected COVID-19 patients.
- ✓ Prepare for clinical and staff illness, absences, and/or quarantine:
 - Ensure staff are self-monitoring for signs of illness
 - Create a mechanism for reporting both illness and absenteeism, if not already in place
 - Develop a return to work policy
 - Ensure staff and their families have access to medical care
 - Determine whether illness will be handled as workers' compensation or personal insurance depending on the situation

- ✓ Cross-train staff for all essential office and medical functions, as necessary.
- ✓ Determine contingency plans for at-risk staff.
- ✓ Review proper office and medical cleaning routines, including management of medical waste.
- ✓ Ensure that you and your staff are familiar with specific public health reporting practices legally required in your area.
- ✓ Post signage in appropriate languages at the entrance and inside your office to alert all patients with respiratory symptoms and fever to notify staff via telephone prior to entering the office.
- ✓ Stay informed. Visit your state and local department of health's website often.

Triage and Patient Flow Systems

- ✓ Determine patient screening process and location prior to patients entering office space.
- ✓ Develop telemedicine service plan if/when your office closes.
- ✓ Post recommendations on your website and voicemail recording to inform patients that they should call the office prior to coming to the office for their scheduled appointment.
- ✓ After delivering care, exit the room as quickly as possible and finish documentation in a separate area.
- ✓ Clean room and all medical equipment completely following appropriate protocol .
- ✓ If possible, rearrange waiting area to keep patients 6 feet apart or stagger appointments appropriately. Remove all magazines and other shared items.
- ✓ Develop care plans that reduce the number of staff caring for patients.
- ✓ Provide alcohol-based hand rub and masks in all reception, waiting and patient care areas.
- ✓ Frequently wipe down public areas and items used by patients such as pens, clipboards, etc.

Waste Disposal

- ✓ No-touch methods should be used to dispose of waste materials
- ✓ Arrange for proper disposal of dangerous waste

