To: UCM and BSD Faculty and Staff  
From: Krista Curell, Incident Commander  
Date: Monday, March 23, 2020  
Subject: HICS Update: #COVID-19 Critical Staff Information – March 23

We are beginning to see a marked increase in the number of COVID-19 patients arriving at our facilities. As of this morning, there were 23 COVID-positive inpatients at our Medical Center. We have a number of in-house Patients Under Investigation (PUIs) along with other diagnosed patients who are recuperating at home. We plan to open a second cohorted unit for patients who have tested positive this afternoon. The team providing care and services to the 28-bed cohorted unit that opened on Friday has been amazing, and we thank you for the work you are doing.

Our teams are also in the process of dedicating a floor of DCAM for care for COVID-positive outpatients and PUIs. Additional details about this will be forthcoming.

It remains absolutely imperative that staff members continue to practice stringent social distancing — especially at work. Please see the previous all-staff message that discussed this critical requirement.

See below for other vital staff updates about our response to this pandemic.

**COVID TESTING:** We continue to have COVID-19 testing available; however, due to an extremely limited inventory of testing supplies and reagents, these tests are available for only Medical Center and BSD staff who are symptomatic and for inpatients. The need for testing in our drive-up clinic site must be determined by our tele-health triage process, which includes MyChart screenings for employees or a call-in option. Patients should not be directed to our testing site at this time, and all employees need an appointment. Any employee who is symptomatic and needs to be tested should contact 2-6819. An appointment will be generated at that time. Unfortunately, no testing is currently available for our ambulatory patients or the general public. The HICS team assesses on a daily basis our capacity to expand testing and will open to broader capacity as soon as our inventory is restored. Hours of operation for the curbside testing process are listed below:

- Curbside testing: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Telehealth center: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
  Voicemail available until 4 p.m.

Please note: All symptomatic UCM/BSD employees may use this triage service, not just those who identify as healthcare workers.

**SURGICAL CASES:** To protect patients and staff — while also conserving our limited PPE — we are now canceling any non-emergent surgical procedure where a patient is electively coming in from home for their care. We will continue to assess the status of this policy daily to determine when we can reverse this difficult decision. Surgical procedures for inpatients, any emergency admissions, and surgical care for trauma will continue except where there are reasonable non-surgical alternatives.

**DONATIONS:** We greatly appreciate support from across the UChicago research community, particularly those who donated additional PPE supplies for clinical colleagues. This support helped us collect additional gloves, masks, face shields/safety goggles, and boot covers over
the weekend. PPE donations are still being accepted from within the University. (You can click here to see what is needed and where and when to drop it off, and you can use this form to track your donations.) We are incredibly grateful for this outpouring of support and will share information in the coming days about how we will be collecting donated supplies from the broader community.

**HOSPITAL DINING UPDATES:** The Sky Café is reopened and will operate 24/7 as will Au Bon Pain in Mitchell. Central Café in DCAM will be closed indefinitely. Food service will also be available at Au Bon Pain in Comer and Billings, although to comply with state mandates, no dining room seating will be available at any location. Staff should use tools such as the Nourish app or Au Bon Pain’s online ordering tool or app to avoid having to wait in line. Additionally, Farmer’s Fridge is adding extra healthy vending options throughout the medical center. Vending machines can be found in the following locations:

- CCD: 7th Floor, 8th Floor, Sky Lounge (starting 3/24), West Lobby (starting 3/24)
- Comer Children’s Hospital
- DCAM: Lobby (starting 3/24)

**REMOTE ACCESS:** Only a limited number of extra IT hardware (laptop computers, tablets, etc.) are currently available for staff use. It’s strongly recommended that employees sign on remotely using their own computers or devices. To access UCM systems on non-UCMC devices, employees must first enroll in Two Factor Authentication here (UCM) and then login through the UCMC Web Apps/Citrix System. Please see information at “UCMC Tip Sheet for Accessing IT Applications Remotely” for tips on doing this. Tip sheets and configuration guides are accessible on the intranet page under Employee Tools > Departments > CBIS Service Desk to help troubleshoot. Discuss any needs for additional IT hardware or relocation to support social distancing with your manager. Additional questions for other IT-related issues should go to the Service Desk at 2-3456.

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We will continue to provide updates on this evolving public health crisis. Please leverage the Coronavirus Resource Center on the Intranet and take time to speak with your manager. Additionally, you can send questions to coronavirus@uchospitals.edu. A 24/7 staff resource line is also available at 1-800-683-5704.