

UW School of Medicine Plan for Resumption of Student Clinical Activities

Guiding principles for medical students engaging in direct contact with patients

The UW School of Medicine (UWSOM) is engaged in thoughtful planning to allow safe re-engagement of students in the direct care of patients to support medical student training. Administration, faculty, and medical students have been involved in the development and implementation of guidelines and requirements regarding in-person student-patient interactions.

The following are important priorities as we plan for student reentry into clinical settings:

- student safety
- patient safety
- faculty and staff safety
- excellent medical student education and training while staying on track to graduate

UWSOM administration is in contact with UW Medicine leadership and the UW COVID-19 Response Team during this process. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) prediction models are monitored as we plan for possible scenarios across WWAMI. The situation will most certainly continue to evolve; and we will use the above priorities in contingency planning.

UWSOM recognizes that learners face many added stressors during the pandemic and recognizes the importance of supporting and maintaining the well-being of students and providers.

Each clinical environment in which students will have direct contact with patients will be assessed for safety and educational readiness, including:

- burden of COVID-19 exposure
- faculty capacity to provide supervision, teaching and feedback
- availability of care protocols, PPE, and clarity of roles

Anyone who has symptoms or questions about whether their condition puts them at higher risk of severe illness from a COVID-19 infection should talk with their health-care provider. Your health-care

provider can also help you assess your current medications and conditions to help you think about actions that can minimize risk to you and members of your household.

Student care of COVID-19 suspected or positive patients

Medical students should not care for COVID-19 suspected or positive patients.

All students should adhere to the following:

1. Physical distancing

Students must take measures to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals when possible.

This includes:

- limiting the number of people riding in elevators
- taking separate vehicles
- avoiding touching other people (for example, handshakes) other than direct patient care

Public health and physical distancing rules will potentially vary across the five-state WWAMI region. Students must adhere to local rules and regulations.

- Hospital/clinic and team room and computer access space is limited and will differ around the WWAMI region. Clerkship directors, attendings, residents and students are asked to work creatively and understand the unique characteristics present at each clinical site.
- Large group didactic sessions should take place online.

2. Proper hand hygiene

Students can reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 by:

- washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If water is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content.

Key moments to wash hands:

- before, during, and after preparing food
- before eating food
- before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
- before and after treating a cut or wound
- before exiting the laboratory
- after using the toilet

- after contact with high touch surfaces (for example, elevators, lobby areas, and reception desks)
- after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- after removing gloves or other personal protective equipment
- after touching an animal or animal waste
- after touching garbage
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and immediately dispose of the used tissue

3. **Appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Recognizing that PPE requirements may vary by clinical site, medical students are responsible for adhering to the local requirements for PPE use. Medical students will be directed to the clerkship site director for safety protocols at their specific clerkship training site. Students with questions should direct those questions to their site director and clerkship director.

Face coverings are required when indoors where people are present. This includes common areas such as hallways, stairways, restrooms and elevators. Face coverings are required when outdoors when social distancing is not possible.

Face coverings are not needed when working or spending time alone in a private office or work area. Face coverings are also not needed when working or spending time outdoors (walking, exercising, etc.) when a 6-foot distance from other people can be maintained.

Medical students will be required to complete infection control modules and watching the WISH donning/doffing PPE videos. Students must also have their fit testing for N95 or other respirators completed. UWSOM will track completion of the required infection control modules and PPE donning and doffing videos.

4. **Follow Procedures for sick personnel, or those potentially exposed to COVID-19**

If a student is exposed to COVID-19:

- UWSOM recognizes that students may be exposed to COVID-19-positive faculty, staff or patients, which may necessitate quarantine and absence from clinical rotations.

- Close contact includes being within approximately 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 for more than a few minutes, living with a person who has COVID-19 or having direct contact with infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils).

If a student has had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 whether or not they experience symptoms:

- Stay at home for 14 days after your last contact with the ill person. Do not go to school or work. Avoid public places.
- Wear a face mask around other people (e.g., when sharing a room or vehicle) or pets, and before you enter a health-care provider's office. Be especially careful around persons who may be at higher risk for severe illness.
- Practice excellent hygiene. Cover coughs and sneezes. Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and running water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing personal household items (e.g., dishes, cups, utensils, towels and bedding).
- Clean all high touch surfaces every day (e.g., counters, tables, doorknobs, phones and keyboards).
- Take your temperature daily, and monitor your health for fever, cough, shortness of breath, respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, sneezing, runny nose), chills, loss of taste or smell and other symptoms of COVID-19 infection. Call your health-care provider if symptoms worsen.
- Stay home and avoid contact with other people for 72 hours after the time when your symptoms improve, and your fever goes down without the use of fever-reducing agents.
- Get tested for COVID-19. UW Medicine offers COVID-19 testing for UW employees/trainees and UW Medicine patients. UW employees/trainees can contact the Employee Health Center to facilitate testing through UW Medicine. Hall Health Center also offers COVID-19 testing for students, staff and alumni. For students doing rotations outside of Seattle, check with your clerkship site director or with the regional dean for testing locations. Students can be reimbursed for the cost of the COVID-19 test.

Communication

If your healthcare provider has confirmed or suspects that you have COVID-19, notify the clerkship director, site director and UWSOM Student Affairs. UWSOM Seattle students, staff, faculty and other academic personnel should contact the EH&S Employee Health Center at emphlth@uw.edu or call 206.685.1026.

Plan of action if a student becomes sick

Students must stay home when sick. Personnel who are sick or experiencing even mild symptoms of illness, must stay home. If symptoms of illness are experienced while on a clinical rotation, students must leave the worksite.

Report COVID-19 symptoms

Students who experience symptoms of COVID-19 infection, including fever (100.4 degrees or higher), cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste and/or smell, chills, sore throat, runny nose, headache, muscle pain and gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, are required to follow these instructions:

- If you are sick, you must stay home. Even if you have mild symptoms.
- Separate yourself from others. Avoid common areas where people gather.
- Practice good hygiene.
- Wear a mask or other approved facial covering.
- Contact your health-care provider in advance. Do not show up at a clinic, urgent care center or other health-care facility without contacting them first. If a health-care provider suspects a COVID-19 infection, they should arrange for COVID-19 testing in accordance with public health guidance. The Environmental Health and Safety Department Employee Health Center can also facilitate COVID-19 testing through UW Medicine. For students doing rotations outside of Seattle, check with your clerkship site director or with the regional dean for where to have a test done. Students can be reimbursed for the cost of the COVID-19 test.

Students with symptoms of COVID-19 illness should read and follow the steps in the FAQ, “What do I do if I feel sick?” found on the [UW Novel Coronavirus & COVID-19 webpage](#).

University units and personnel are required to report to a University Employee Health Center suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. This includes any individual who has spent time in a University location, including, but not limited to, all personnel whose healthcare provider has suspected or confirmed COVID-19 illness.

COVID-19 Resources

CDC, WHO, local health authority websites:

- [Guidelines regarding who should be tested](#)
- [Those at risk of infection](#)

UW Medicine:

- [UW Medicine's The Huddle](#)
- COVID-19 Incident Command

University of Washington:

- [UW information for students](#)
- [UW Environmental Health and Safety](#)

Guidance on facemask use for preventing the spread of COVID-19:

- [COVID-19 - Control and Prevention | Healthcare Workers and Employers | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)