

UW School of Medicine Plan for Medical Student Clinical Activities during COVID-19 Pandemic

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 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
- faculty, trainee and staff safety
- patient 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 EH&S 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

Students have a professional responsibility to keep patients and colleagues safe by reducing their personal risk of contracting COVID-19 outside of work. Students are required to be vaccinated against

COVID-19 or have an approved exemption in place. Students must wear appropriate PPE as recommended by infection prevention and control when in direct contact with patients or in patient care settings. Faculty, staff, other members of the health care team and patients are also expected to utilize appropriate PPE.

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. If it is deemed unsafe for a student to be in the clinical setting, contact Dr. Gerald Tolbert, Interim Associate Dean of Student Affairs at admins@uw.edu, to discuss options and action steps.

Student care of COVID-19 suspected or positive patients

Student participation in the care of patients with confirmed COVID-19 and patients under investigation (PUI) will be at the discretion of the faculty with whom the student is working.

Any student who for personal or health reasons does not feel comfortable caring for patients with confirmed COVID-19 or patient under investigation should contact Dr. Gerald Tolbert, admins@uw.edu, Interim Associate Dean of Students, to discuss their situation and explore alternative options.

All students should adhere to the following:

1. Physical distancing

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:

- Using alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol content) upon entry and exit of patient rooms and care areas unless the patient is in enteric precautions

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

Additional information about hand washing in medical settings can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/providers/index.html> and [https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Your 5 Moments For Hand Hygiene Poster.pdf](https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Your_5_Moments_For_Hand_Hygiene_Poster.pdf)

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.

Universal masking with surgical or procedural masks (not cloth face coverings) is required within the healthcare setting such as hospitals and clinics.

Face coverings are required regardless of vaccination status when indoors where other people are present and in all public and common areas. This includes common areas such as work rooms, break rooms, hallways, stairways, restrooms and elevators. Face coverings are recommended when in outdoor crowded settings and in settings where there is a decreased ability to consistently maintain a physical distance between others.

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.) unless physical distancing cannot be maintained in large crowds.

Medical students will be required to complete infection control modules and watch the [WISH donning/doffing PPE videos](#) at the beginning of each academic year. It is strongly recommended that students review the infection control modules and watch the WISH donning/doffing PPE videos at the beginning of each clinical rotation. Students must also have fit testing for N95 or similar respirators and/or training for other types of respirators (ex. PAPR or CAPR units) completed if a respirator is required in the course of patient care. UWSOM will track completion of the required infection control modules and PPE donning and doffing videos.

4. COVID-19 Exposure/Symptoms/Diagnosis Procedures for Students on Clinical Rotations

UWSOM students who test positive for COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2), have a known COVID-19 exposure or develop symptoms of COVID-19 should:

- 1) Let the clerkship director, administrator and clinical site director know, leave the clinical environment and contact the local infection prevention and control team.
- 2) Seek medical care if needed.
- 3) Contact the local infection prevention and control team at your rotation site.
- 4) Call the Campus Health Physician blood borne pathogen/COVID number, (206) 906-8996, identify yourself as a UWSOM medical student and ask to speak with the campus health physician. Follow the instructions from the campus health physician.
- 5) Let the clerkship director, administrator and clinical site director know the recommendation of the campus health physician.
- 6) Let Dr. Tolbert, Interim Associate Dean for Student Affairs, adminsa@uw.edu, know about the situation.
- 7) Inform UW Environmental Health & Safety by sending an email with your contact information and a description of the situation to covidehc@uw.edu.

5. COVID-19 Exposure/Symptoms/Diagnosis Procedures for Students in the Foundations Phase

UWSOM students in the Foundations phase who test positive for COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2), have a known COVID-19 exposure or develop symptoms of COVID-19 should:

- 1) Seek medical care if needed
- 2) Not attend any in person classes
- 3) Let their Foundations dean know
- 4) Follow instructions from their regional campus
- 5) Inform UW Environmental Health & Safety by sending an email with your contact information and a description of the situation to covidehc@uw.edu

6. Testing options for students on clinical rotations

For UWSOM students who need a COVID-19 test, the testing options are:

- 1) If the student is at a UW Medicine facility, they should complete the survey at: [EH COVID-19](#), and then will be scheduled to have a test done. This site should not be used for travel related testing.

- 2) If the student is in Seattle, the clinical site may do the test without charging the student. Or the student can complete the survey at: [EH COVID-19](#) and will be scheduled to have a test done at a UW Medicine facility.
- 3) If the student is not in Seattle, they should discuss with their clinical site director or the regional assistant clinical dean (<https://education.uwmedicine.org/wwami-program/>) to determine the best option for having a test done. Student's health insurance may be billed for this or the student may be reimbursed by submitting a receipt to gowwami@uw.edu.

If students need a test prior to their next clinical rotation, the testing options are:

- 1) If the student is in Seattle, call Hall Health at 206-616-2495 to schedule an appointment to have the test done. Student's health insurance may be billed for this or the student may be reimbursed by submitting a receipt to gowwami@uw.edu.
- 2) If the student is not in Seattle, they should discuss with the regional assistant clinical dean (<https://education.uwmedicine.org/wwami-program/>) to determine the best option for having a test done. Students can also go to: <https://uw.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c520e8edb735e2a0b6614c7cc&id=212d20353a&e=8fe3b3230c> to find a testing site near them. Student's health insurance may be billed for this or the student may be reimbursed by submitting a receipt to gowwami@uw.edu.

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 (at covidehc@uw.edu) 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](#)