



## Valley Health Services Pandemic Emergency Plan

Infection control has always been a priority of Valley Health Services. A comprehensive infection control plan, under the direction of the facility's Infection Preventionist, is followed incorporating the infection control measures set forth by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Facility status and statistics about communicable and pandemic disease are reported by facility staff in accordance with NYSDOH and CDC requirements.

Staff are educated about infection control policies and procedures including exposure risks, airborne, droplet and blood borne pathogens, universal precautions, and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff follow the facility policy for the proper handling of contaminated waste.

Valley Health Services' Pandemic Management Committee reviews and ensures availability and procurement of sanitation/disinfectant supplies known to kill the organism causing the illness and the necessary PPE ensuring the safety of staff and residents while performing direct care during the disease outbreak. A 60-day supply of PPE is maintained and accessible through contract or on-site storage.

During an outbreak, staff, as directed by the NYSDOH and/or CDC, will be screened for the illness upon reporting to work. Weekly testing may also be required of the staff, and residents may be tested and screened as well, depending on the presence and extent of illness within the community and/or facility. Residents may be asked to abide by social distancing and wear a face mask. Gatherings of residents at mealtimes and for activity programs will likely be suspended. Infection control staff will alert staff and visitors to the presence of disease through the placement of signs in highly visible areas with instructions, including cough etiquette and hygiene measures. Information about the pandemic will be made available to staff, residents, and resident representatives.

As necessary and directed by NYSDOH and/or CDC, residents may be quarantined to their units, rooms, or be contained within the facility. Visitors may be restricted or prohibited from the building during the disease outbreak with visitation guidelines fluctuating with the level of disease presence. Virtual visits using various electronic methods will be encouraged to keep residents engaged with family and friends. If visitation is permitted, the use of PPE may be required.

Depending on the disease, residents may be prohibited from receiving items from outside the facility. Appointments outside the building, unless deemed essential, may be rescheduled or cancelled. Use of telehealth may be substituted for some appointments. Only essential vendors and/or stakeholders may be permitted in the building and will abide by screening and testing requirements, and may be prohibited from entering the building.

Cohorting of residents may also occur dependent on the number of residents infected with the illness. Residents will be cohorted by those diagnosed with the illness, those known to not have the illness, and those who are suspected of having the illness. Valley Health Services has designated areas of the

building to ensure residents being cohorted do not have contact with one another until it is known that there is no presence of the disease. Residents requiring a transfer to a hospital or emergency department will be assured of a bed upon their return.

Valley Health Services staff will notify residents and their representatives of the status of the illness on a weekly basis, at no cost to the resident or representative. This will occur by letter, phone, or posting on the facility webpage. Residents and their representatives will be alerted upon the confirmed presence of the disease by a resident or staff member within 24 hours of the facility's awareness of the disease presence. They will also be informed of the actions being taken to contain and minimize the spread of the disease. Resident representatives whose loved one has been diagnosed with the illness will be updated daily and upon a change in condition.

Residents, their representatives, and their stakeholders will be informed of recovery leading to a return of normal operations.

The entire Valley Health Services' Pandemic Emergency Plan is available upon request through the below methods of communication:

- **Email:** [keisenhut@valleyhealthservices.org](mailto:keisenhut@valleyhealthservices.org)
- **Phone:** (315) 866-3330, ext. 2245