



TO: Catholic Health Medical Staff
FROM: Hans P Cassagnol, MD, MMM, EVP & Chief Physician Executive
DATE: July 16, 2020
RE: Immediate Change in COVID-19 Testing

A substantial disruption in the national supply chain for COVID-19 testing has led to a sudden need to revise current testing strategies for our acute care sites. The supply chain disruption is affecting healthcare facilities across the nation. Presently, all Catholic Health hospital admissions are tested for SARS-CoV-2 infection regardless of symptoms as part of Catholic Health's broad screening strategy.

Fortunately, this broad screening has continued to show very low incidence of COVID-19 among asymptomatic patients seeking care at our facilities. Indeed, rates of COVID-19 in the Western New York region remain very low compared to previous months and many other parts of the nation.

Due to the unanticipated disruption in our testing supply chain, acute care facilities must immediately alter testing to include only the following individuals in our acute care facilities:

- Patients presenting with any of the following symptoms compatible with COVID-19:
 - New Cough
 - Fever
 - Sore Throat
 - Nasal Congestion
 - Unexplained loss of taste or smell
 - Unexplained Hypoxia
- Patients scheduled for procedures designated for COVID-19 screening
- Patients scheduled for discharge to a SNF if no testing available in the past 72 hours
- Patients receiving Labor & Delivery Care

It is not clear when the supply chain disruption will be resolved. Pending resolution of this issue, we ask that providers exercise responsible stewardship of our limited testing supply to forestall a larger and more significant disruption in our ability to test those individuals at highest risk for COVID-19.

Please do not hesitate to contact your site's infection preventionist if you have any questions.

Thank you for your collaboration and all that you do to keep our patients, staff and visitors safe.