

Session 2: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance and Practical Approaches for Improved Outcomes

Key Takeaways:

- **Know where your center’s policies and procedures are for obtaining, donning and doffing (putting on, taking off) PPE and how to access them at all times.**
- Have a training/education plan for staff, visitors, vendors/contractors on what are the elements of PPE for nursing homes and when to use PPE appropriately (under what circumstances).
- Have a process and tools (such as a PPE Burn Rate Calculator) to estimate the center’s need for PPE in the weeks/months ahead in order to be prepared.

Identification of written policies and protocols that guide PPE use allows teams to improve support and close gaps that may contribute to COVID-19 spread. The following question set can be used to facilitate discussions and reveal opportunities across and within key members of the team. Please consider using/adapting them in your next huddles or team meetings.

Questions by Content

Transmission, symptoms, immediate management	Who is responsible for identifying signs/symptoms or changes in resident condition that could be related to COVID-19? Is there a clear policy for necessary immediate steps (resident placement, activity/dining restrictions, transmission-based precautions) that can be accessed by all relevant staff? Does the center have appropriate tools to perform and document the tasks above? Do staff know who to contact when someone fails screening or shows COVID-19 signs/symptoms?
PPE Selection, Donning and Doffing	What is considered acceptable PPE and what is not acceptable in a nursing home? Who (what role) is responsible for tracking PPE training/education of all relevant staff? Who will monitor staff members for appropriate donning/doffing techniques and how will this be documented? Do you have a stable source of at least two weeks of PPE (gowns, gloves, facemasks, face shields, goggles or eye protection)?
Follow-Up Plan (monitoring over time)	Who is responsible for ensuring proper follow-up of PPE supply levels based on a burn rate calculator or other method? How is this communicated across departments/shifts? Are staff members able to articulate how and when to use full PPE (COVID-19 positive and negative residents, entire center)?
Improvement Concepts	Are the processes for selecting, donning and doffing PPE consistent, reliable and clear for all relevant stakeholders? Are tools and methods for documentation of selection and use of PPE appropriate, evidence-based and available to all relevant staff across departments (including laundry, housekeeping and others)?

Critical Questions for Leadership

	Is there a contingency plan for how to manage potential PPE shortages and is it accessible to all relevant staff? How are staff supported psychologically/emotionally when being told they have less PPE available than recommended by current guidelines?
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Key Concepts by Stakeholder Group

What do Medical Directors Need to know and discuss with the team?	How to determine when the PPE supply is at conventional, contingency, or crisis levels and what actions to take in response. In partnership with DON and administrator, make decisions on resident placement or cohorting (Isolation, Quarantine, COVID-19 unit, when to return to previous unit/room). How to streamline process for ordering enough PPE to minimize risk of spread within the center.
What do DONs need to know?	That there is a staffing plan to cover resident needs and support staff. Who on the team is responsible for monitoring PPE supplies and ordering/escalating requests as needed. Enhanced Infection Prevention Plan for the center including ordering/monitoring sufficient PPE. Communicate with Staff – alert and update staff/families or care partners about proper use of PPE

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<p>What Do Nurses/CNAs need to know?</p>	<p>When to use PPE (with which residents/on which units or throughout the center)? Appropriate PPE donning and doffing techniques (must be able to return demonstrate upon request). How often to screen for resident signs/symptoms and where to document/communicate that information. What is the center's signage plan for alerting residents, staff and visitors to all aspects of COVID-19 infection prevention and management, including use of PPE?</p>
<p>What does the interprofessional team need to know?</p>	<p>What are key COVID-19 signs and symptoms and appropriate immediate responses? How does requirement to use PPE impact workflows and each staff person's role? Appropriate use of PPE while engaging with residents, visitors and other staff. Understand and communicate any center-specific PPE or related signage or policies.</p>