Hospital Infection Prevention Tips for COVID-19

PPE Conservation

- To conserve PPE inventory, consider not isolating patients who are colonized or infected with VRE and/or MRSA and practice standard precautions when caring for these patients.
- Limit the number of staff (e.g. nursing and medical students) entering rooms of patients on Droplet Precautions during rounds to conserve gowns/masks.
- Consider having staff and patients wear surgical masks for short exposures (especially in clinics) and only use N-95 respirators for aerosol generating procedures such as specimen collection.
- Scour the hospital for stashed supplies of PPE, especially N-95 respirators and surgical masks.
- Eliminate annual fit testing at this time to conserve supplies.
- Refresh staff on how to don and doff PPE and then perform observations while they are taking care of a patient to make sure that they are not contaminating themselves.
- Be aware of your hospital’s current policy on the re-use of PPE. Know how to re-use items safely.
- Consider moving the gloves, masks, and alcohol hand sanitizer located near the entrances to your hospital to an area nearby where someone can monitor them to keep supplies stocked and also prevent theft.

Patient Care

- Patients being admitted with severe symptoms of COVID-19 should be admitted directly into ICU in the event they code. This limits the potential exposure of many staff and staff to COVID-19.
- For confirmed cases of COVID-19, dedicate a nurse, and possibly a physician, for patient care thus limiting the risk of exposing additional staff and patients.

Staff Care

- Limit the number of hospital meetings, keep the number of people at meetings to a minimum or use phone conferences.
- Consider monitoring staff for fever at the start of each shift.
- Physicians should practice “bare below the elbow’’ to prevent contamination and encourage good hand hygiene.
- Wipe down your stethoscopes and phones to prevent transmission.
- Wipe down your work area before use.
- De-clutter work areas so it is easier to clean and less items that need to be cleaned.
- Practice social distancing. This may mean temporarily changing how rounding is performed.
- Do not come to work if you have a fever or are sick.

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