## Infection Control Guidelines – Outpatient/Ambulatory Practices

The following **Infection Control Guidelines for Ambulatory Care** have been developed in conjunction with updated RIDOH Guidelines: [https://health.ri.gov/publications/guidance/Guidance-for-Ambulatory-Care-Settings-for-Infection-Prevention.pdf](https://health.ri.gov/publications/guidance/Guidance-for-Ambulatory-Care-Settings-for-Infection-Prevention.pdf)

### Level of Care Provided:
- **Telehealth**
- **Face to Face Available**
  - Telehealth visits may continue.
  - Face to face visits will be scheduled based on clinical criteria and visit priority determined by the practice leadership.

### Common Face-to-Face Visits
- Healthcare Maintenance & Immunizations
- Surgical Procedures
- Illnesses (including respiratory) where a physical exam is essential to a correct diagnosis and treatment plan
- Patients uncomfortable with technology
- Crisis Evaluations

### Prioritized Face-to-Face Visits
- **Schedule Well Visits Before Sick/COVID Visits**, where appropriate and possible (e.g., morning for well, afternoon for sick)
  - **Measurements of Vital Signs**, including pulse oximetry, that would affect clinical management
  - **Chronic Disease Management**, including:
    - Diabetes
    - Uncontrolled Hypertension
  - **In-Person Newborn Care**, including well visits and immunization of infants and young children to 24 months
  - **Catch-Up Immunizations**, especially for the youngest patients and those at higher risk for complications from vaccine-preventable diseases
  - **Whenever possible avoid the use of paper screening tools.** Consider obtaining history via phone or by means of the patient portal prior to scheduled visit.

### Infection Control Standards

| Limit the # of People Allowed into the Facility | **During Visit:** Only Patient and One Essential Caregiver (Parent/Guardian of Patient) see the [Lifespan Visitation Policy](#) |
| Limit Points of Entry and Exit |
| Screening | • **May Screen** all patients and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms **prior to appointments** so they are appropriately triaged  
• **Review** masking requirements. If patient unable to mask, refer to the [Source Control Policy](#)  
• **Screen** all patients and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms **when they enter the facility**  
  o **Perform Temperature Checks** when screening questions cannot be reliably answered  
If patient screens positive for symptoms of COVID-19, follow the [Outpatient Algorithm for Care of the Patient](#) |
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| Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Patients/Visitors | • All patients and visitors will be provided a healthcare provided mask on entry to a Lifespan facility.  
• Cloth masks and valved masks will not be allowed unless covered by a healthcare provided mask.  
• If a patient or visitor enters wearing a surgical mask or non-valved N95, they may continue to wear that mask and may also be provided a healthcare provided mask to wear on top. |
| Social Distancing | • **Waiting Rooms** may return to normal capacity if all patients and those allowed to accompany them are masked at all times |
| Environment | • **Clean and sanitize high-touch and common surfaces often per office protocol.** Include counters, door handles, surfaces in waiting areas, and bathrooms  
  o Assign task daily to a staff member  
• Limit number of available bathrooms, if possible, to reduce areas to be cleaned  
• Hand sanitizer readily available for patients and visitors |
| Handling of Patient Registration & Payment | • **Have patients sanitize hands before signing signature pad.** Wipe down stylus and signature pads with disinfectant. |