

Newsletter #64 April 28, 2020

Update Re: Wearing Shoes

This newsletter provides additional information regarding shoes being worn in a Community Care Foster Family Home (CCFFH).

Community Ties of America (CTA) and the Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA) shares everyone's concern to protect our community, our kupuna, and at the same time comply with all federal and state safety regulations for the workplace.

This newsletter contains educational and training information, recommendations from the OHCA and CTA, and outlines procedures that will be implemented based on universal infection control best practices and while remaining respectful of cultural practices as much as possible.

We are all concerned about Coronavirus (COVID-19). We understand that some people are acting on fear and that the media publishes mixed messages which adds to confusion.

We trust the information in this newsletter will help to calm fears and to focus on other pressing health practices while not intending to minimize concerns over COVID-19.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Everyone is encouraged to learn more about proper PPE requirements and procedures. PPE should be used only as appropriate by following the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) guidance. Refer to the links at the end of this newsletter.

There is no evidence-based scientific data that proves wearing shoes in a residential care setting spreads COVID-19 or any other disease or that wearing PPE booties prevents the spread, especially since COVID-19 is a respiratory virus. All health care licensees and workers should follow information from trusted and credible sources such as the CDC, WHO and infectious disease

experts rather than to rely on media reports. It's important to determine the facts and evidence.

Good household cleaning and hand hygiene remain more important. We live in a world where it would be impossible to completely disinfect from all bacteria and viruses since they live elsewhere such as on skin, hair, inside people and animals. And people don't spend a lot of time on the floor or touching their shoes and then their faces.

Infection Control

The CDC continues to stress that the most important thing for everyone to do is to practice good hand hygiene, wear a mask, avoid touching your face, practice social distancing, and cover coughs and sneezes. **According to the CDC and WHO, effective hand hygiene is CRUCIAL to limit the spread of the virus. Use soap and water and wash for at least 20 seconds or use proper hand sanitizers. Both will inactivate the virus based on scientific studies.**

Wearing a cloth face mask is now being recommended in open public areas where social distancing may be difficult. It also assists in covering coughs/sneezes and limits people from touching their faces.

A few CCFFH operators have quoted a recent study published by the CDC and reported by the media. The CDC made an early release of this specific study, although the full study has not yet been published. The study was done over 13 days using samples from the soles of medical staff in an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a hospital in Wuhan, China, which housed 15 patients with severe disease and a general ward housing 24 patients with milder disease. The staff members were exposed to large amounts of respiratory droplets in rooms of COVID-19 positive intubated patients or where aerosol generating procedures were performed. Environmental contamination findings were higher in the ICU than in general wards.

However, CTA surveyors do not work in or inspect hospital ICUs or general wards, so are not exposed to large amounts of droplets from COVID-19 positive patients. Media reports may not have contained all the scientific evidence and key information may have been left out, and media reports may have taken information out of context. Some CCFFH operators may have mistakenly associated the study results with the realities of CTA's inspections.

Strategies for Healthcare Workers

In order to address requests made after the last newsletter was published, the following protocols will be implemented.

- Comply with State and Federal Laws:
 - CTA and DOH will comply with all federal, state and local regulations just as CCFFHs do when entering CCFFHs.
 - CCFFHs are businesses that are certified under DOH regulatory authority for Medicaid payment purposes. As a result, CCFFHs must comply with state and federal regulations including Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-800 as well as general excise tax (GET) and business license requirements under the Hawaii law.
- Follow Workplace Safety Practices:
 - While CCFFHs are the clients' residential homes, it is the work site for employees of the homes and for CTA when conducting surveys. Remember, CCFFHs are businesses located in a home environment rather than in an institutionalized environment.
 - For safety reasons, CTA workers are not to remove their shoes. Shoes should be slip resistant and closed toed to prevent injuries, falls, trips and slips.
- Use of PPE:
 - Refer to the CDC website for instructions on donning and doffing of PPE, especially booties/shoe covers.
 - For purposes of this newsletter, the primary use of booties/shoe covers is to be respectful of the home and its residents. It is not intended as a primary way of preventing the spread of COVID-19.
 - CCFFHs should have a workplace policy and procedure (P&P) on the medical conditions for using PPE, what PPE should be used in the home, and who is required to use PPE.
 - CCFFHs should supply PPE to wearers or they may require employees to provide their own PPE.
 - CTA surveyors will wear booties/shoe covers when provided by the CCFFH.
- Using Shoes:
- If booties/shoe covers are not worn, shoes should be wiped or disinfected.

- Refer to the CDC website for instructions on shoe disinfecting.
- Workers may change into dedicated work shoes following disinfecting procedures.

CDC video for putting on boot covers:

https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/ppe-training/paprrrespirator_coveralls/donning_06.html

CDC video for removing boot or shoe covers:

https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/ppe-training/paprrrespirator_coveralls/doffing_14.html

CDC video showing how to disinfect shoes with a disinfectant wipe:

https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/ppe-training/n95respirator_coveralls/doffing_18.html

Relevant Resources

The CDC study regarding the transmission of viruses by footwear can be found at: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0885_article

CDC guidance for wearing shoe covers:

The CDC says, “ Shoe covers are **not** recommended at this time for personnel caring for patients with COVID-19.” <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/infection-prevention-control-faq.html>

The WHO does not list shoe covers as appropriate PPE:

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331495/WHO-2019-nCoV-IPC-2020.3-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

The CDC study regarding hand hygiene can be found at:

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0915_article

Current infection control guidelines from the CDC can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/>

OSHA requirements for nursing homes and personal/residential care facilities:

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/nursinghome/enforcement.html>

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/nursinghome/hazards_solutions.html

<https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/04052012>

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/hazardrecognition.html#risk_classification

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/worker_protections.html

Additional article:

<https://www.livescience.com/64409-should-you-take-off-shoes-indoors.html>

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