

# **Newsletter #78 September 17, 2020**

## **CCFFH Admissions and Re-admission**

CTA is sending this information to help CCFFHs (a residential care facility - RCF) determine their process for admitting and re-admitting clients during the current Coronavirus status in Hawaii. This newsletter was approved by the Office of Health Care Assurance.

### **New admissions or re-admissions**

#### **Considerations for Residential Care Facilities (RCF) admitting new clients or accepting returning clients from the hospital**

The decision to admit new clients, or accept returning clients from the hospital, who have COVID-19 symptoms per CDC guidelines, exposure, or are COVID-19 positive, depends on the RCF's ability to safely care for that client and other individuals in the RCF. Here are some items to consider:

- Is your supply of PPE adequate to protect everyone from transmission per current CDC guidelines? If not can you reach out to the client's CMA or HiEma to request assistance in obtaining supplies?
- What is your current capacity to isolate and/or cohort individuals who are positive or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19?
- What is your capacity for appropriately cleaning and sanitizing non-disposable equipment?
- How adequate is your current staffing? Are you able to designate staff to care exclusively for clients with confirmed or presumed COVID-19 without utilizing those staff to care for other clients?
- Do you have adequate staff to follow the client's service plan?
- What is your ability to follow CDC precaution guidelines?

This is not an all-inclusive list of considerations in making an admissions decision. It is primarily focused on several infection control recommendations. Each facility should factor in available PPE, staffing and physical layout of their facility

*It is important that clients who don't need hospitalization are not taken to a hospital. Hospital rooms need to be reserved for those that are severely ill and need the higher level of medical care.*

**When COVID-19 status is unknown (client has never been tested, has not exhibited symptoms or has not been around anyone who has)**

1. The client should be admitted as any other client. There should be no need for isolation precautions.
2. Client should be monitored daily for COVID-19 symptoms like all other clients in the RCF.
3. Standard precautions, which all RCFs should have been using prior to COVID-19, should be utilized with the addition of using a face covering or mask.
4. All other recommended CDC guidelines such as social distancing and frequent hand-washing by all person in the RCF, including clients, should be followed.

**Per current CDC published information, data shows that a person who has had and recovered from COVID-19 may have low level of the virus in their bodies for up to 3 months after diagnosis. This means that if the person who has recovered from COVID-19 is retested within 3 months of initial infection, they may continue to have a positive test result even though they are NOT spreading COVID-19. <sup>1</sup>**

***A. When the client has been tested and was positive***

1. If the client was hospitalized or in a nursing home, the facility should release the client with discharge instructions including any additional isolation or quarantine precautions that should be taken to care for the client, if there are any.

**Isolation Precautions:**

- a. Should place the client in a single-person isolation room or separate area anywhere in the home that can be used as an isolation area away from others so the client can be monitored for evidence of COVID-19.
- b. RCFs admitting isolation clients should have dedicated caregivers that take care of only that client and self-isolate when not taking care of that client. This prevents possible transmission to other clients or other residents of the RCF.
- c. A Face mask, gloves, gowns and eye protection (goggles or a face shield that covers the front and sides of the face) should be worn.
- d. If a client must leave their room, have them put on a mask, if able, and practice social distancing. Disinfect areas the client went to afterwards.
- e. Clients can be transferred out of the single-person room or observation area to a shared room if they remain without a fever and without symptoms for 14 days after their admission or sooner upon their healthcare professional's recommendation.
- f. Testing at the end of this period can also be considered although the RCF may be liable for the charges, a physician may need to order a test and clients will need to give consent.

2. If the client is coming from another RCF:

- a. If they had symptoms, per CDC guidelines, the client can be around others 10 days after symptoms first appeared AND 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.<sup>1</sup>
- b. If they had no symptoms, they can be around others after 10 days has passed since the positive test.
- c. For those that were severely ill or have severely weakened immune systems due to a health condition or medication.
  - i. These clients may need to isolate longer than 10 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appeared.
  - ii. These clients may require testing to determine when they can be around others. Their healthcare provider will help to decide whether a test needs to be conducted and/or when they can resume being around others.

3. Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others. However, if their healthcare professional recommends testing,

they will let that person know when they can resume being around others based on their test results.

4. Isolation precautions should be followed for the time periods listed above in a, b or c.

RCFs should follow their applicable rules regarding transfers and discharges if they are going to refuse to re-admit a current client of the RCF.

**B. *When a client tested negative but has COVID-19 clinical symptoms per CDC guidelines***

**OR**

***Clients were not tested but exhibit clinical symptoms of COVID-19 per CDC guidelines***

**OR**

***Clients do not meet the medical criteria for a hospital admission***

Isolation precautions as stated above should be followed.

**C. *Clients who have been around a person with COVID-19 (they may not have been tested or tested negative and have no symptoms)***

Isolate for 14 days after their last exposure to that person. However, per CDC guidelines, anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 and who:

- Developed COVID-19 illness within the previous 3 months AND
- Has recovered AND
- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms

DOES NOT need to isolate<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

Note: Since a person can have a positive test up to at least 3 months after initial infection, individuals are not re-tested after a known positive test. There can also be false positive tests and false negative tests so testing all admissions would not necessarily be a confirmation of any current infection or recent exposure. Please keep this in mind when making the decision to admit

or not admit a client into your RCF

Mahalo,  
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