



NUMBERED NOTICE

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From: Ben Weston, MD, MPH, Medical Director

To: All EMS Providers

Subject: COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus

Purpose: Directive

This information is based on the most up to date knowledge from medical resources including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the WI Dept of Health. Information is changing daily. Department level information awareness is critical.

Situation

- In late 2019, a novel Coronavirus now known as COVID-19 was detected in China, which has now become globally widespread with major community and health system impact.
- EMS providers need up to date information and guidance on containment and precautions.

Background

- Presents as an influenza-like illness with symptoms including fever and lower respiratory tract symptoms, such as cough and difficulty breathing.
- Person-to-person transmission has become widespread in certain parts of the world.
- Unknowns remain such as exact mode of transmission, incubation period, typical severity, and death rate.

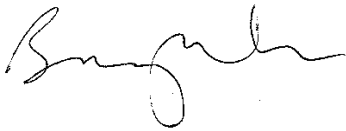
Assessment

- Current data suggests we are likely to see community transmission.
- EMS awareness, screening and infection prevention/control measures are important to mitigate community transmission .
- Understanding of COVID-19 is constantly evolving. At the bottom of this document are key CDC and Wisconsin Department of Health links that should be monitored on a regular basis.

Recommendation

- The CDC, [WI Dept of Health](#) and local health departments will serve as our sources for accurate information.
- Given constantly evolving information, critical CDC up-to-date **and more detailed** information for EMS can be found [here](#) and screening guidelines found [here](#).
- Typical cases are presenting with fever or lower respiratory tract symptoms (such as cough or respiratory difficulty) AND exposure history based on travel to key countries as identified by above links or exposure to laboratory confirmed COVID-19 patients.
- EMS encounters with suspicion for COVID-19 should:
 - place patient in standard paper surgical mask

- don gloves, N95 mask, eye protection, gown
 - minimize use of nebulized medications and advanced airway support as possible based on patient status
 - alert receiving facility of positive screening via EMS Communications Center
 - decontaminate ambulance and equipment via department and manufacturer instructions for airborne infection
 - report suspected cases to EMS Medical Director via EMS Communications Center
 - To conserve PPE:
 - per CDC guidelines, at this time, [N95](#) masks can be extended use over multiple patients for the duration of a shift
 - N95 masks and gowns may be reserved for patients requiring nebulized medications and advanced airway support in times of supply chain shortage; paper surgical masks should still be worn
 - minimize number of providers contacting suspected patient
 - Patient can be transported to the closest, most appropriate hospital per policy; no specialty resource hospital is identified at this point.
 - Additional screening procedures are in place for EMS 9-1-1 Dispatch as well as EMS Communications to provide a multi-layered approach.
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The above information is reviewed and compiled by the MCW Division of EMS Medicine.

