Health care settings and health care providers (includes outpatient, nursing homes/long-term care facilities, inpatient, telehealth)

What health care settings including nursing homes/long-term care facilities, can do to prepare for COVID-19, if the facilities has cases of COVID-19, or if the community is experiencing spread of COVID-19)

Start now:

- Continue to follow regulatory guidance from CMS and MDH.
- Implement changes to visitor policies to further limit exposures to health care providers (HCP), residents, and patients. Changes could include temperature/symptom checks for visitors, limiting visitor movement in the facility, etc.
- Implement triage before entering facilities (e.g., parking lot triage, front door), phone triage, and telemedicine to limit unnecessary health care visits.
- Actively monitor absenteeism and respiratory illness among HCP and patients.
- Actively monitor PPE supplies.
- Establish processes to evaluate and test large numbers of patients and HCP with respiratory symptoms (e.g., designated clinic, surge tent).
- Consider allowing asymptomatic exposed HCP to work while wearing a facemask.
- Begin to cross train HCP for working in other units in anticipation of staffing shortages.

Continue these activities:

- Provide health care personnel, including staff at nursing homes and long-term care facilities and systems with tools and guidance needed to support their decisions to care for patients at home (or in nursing homes/long-term care facilities).
- Develop systems for phone triage and telemedicine to reduce unnecessary health care visits.
- Assess facility infection control programs; assess personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies and optimize PPE use.
- Assess plans for monitoring of HCP and plans for increasing numbers of HCP if needed.
- Assess visitor policies.
- Assess HCP sick leave policies. Health care facilities should provide non-punitive sick leave options to allow HCP to stay home when ill.
• Encourage HCP to stay home and notify health care facility administrators when sick.
• In conjunction with local health department, identify exposed HCP, and implement recommended monitoring and work restrictions.
• Implement triage prior to entering facilities to rapidly identify and isolate patients with respiratory illness (e.g., phone triage before patient arrival, triage upon arrival).

Adapted from the Minnesota Department of Health Strategies to Slow the Spread of COVID-19 in Minnesota