

COVID-19: Practice Management Considerations



Physicians Caring for Texans

Prepare and Educate Your Staff on ...

Clinical Guidance

- Essential virus information including: [signs and symptoms](#), [how it spreads](#), treatment of symptoms, and overall clinic [preparedness](#).
- Following recommended [isolation precautions](#) and [infection control](#) measures such as immediately masking and escorting patients to an area away from other patients, providing alternative facility entrances/exits, and limiting nonessential personnel interaction with suspected cases.
- Reporting suspected cases to your [local health department](#).
- Displaying [virus alert](#) and awareness signs close to the front door and throughout the reception area and clinic.
- The importance of providing patient education about personal preparedness, [prevention](#), treatment, staying home if possible, and postponing elective health care services.
- Proper [hand hygiene and washing techniques](#).
- Disinfection procedures and [products](#) for equipment and surfaces.

Operational Guidance

- [Appropriate and optimal use](#) of limited personal protective equipment (PPE). Review [proper technique](#) for putting on and taking off PPE.
- Doing as much over the phone as possible, including triage with appropriate screening questions.
- The need to update your internal phone tree for staff notifications.
- Revising the practice's emergent services notification message to patients who call after hours.
- The practice's location of choice with respiratory isolation capacity, should patients need to be redirected for care.
- The ethical importance of not abandoning patients.
- Avoiding [stigma](#) towards certain patient populations.
- Getting their own [households](#) ready.

Prepare for Sick Staff

- Advise staff ill with fever or respiratory symptoms to STAY HOME!
- Follow [risk assessment](#) guidance for staff exposure.
- Cross-train all staff members in essential tasks.
- Allow staff to telecommute and perform certain tasks like scheduling and billing remotely.
- Ensure you have ample supply of PPE (e.g., gowns, goggles, gloves, and respiratory protection) and disposable goods such as facial tissue, soap, hand sanitizer, and disinfectants.
- Establish a relationship with a temporary staffing agency to help fill unexpected absences.
- Assign staff to tasks like rescheduling patients and forwarding incoming telephone lines.
- Identify housing options close to the practice to help keep healthy staff healthy and away from sick family members.
- If you have to temporarily close the practice, determine necessary staffing needs for "catching up" with additional evening and/or weekend hours.

Tips for Financial Preparedness

- Anticipate and budget for incurring additional costs for overtime pay, temporary staffing, and increased supply inventory.
- Investigate telemedicine opportunities and quickly implementable available platforms that enable social distancing and provide an avenue to avoid or lessen diminished revenue.
- Review insurance policies for business interruption protection. Markets for insurance may close with looming events and reopen when the event has passed.
- Work with a locum tenens placement firm to help fill physician and nonphysician practitioner absences.
- Contact your bank to establish a line of credit or payroll loan to cover operating expenses, accounts payable, and payroll.
- Be liquid – have cash on hand.

Additional Resources From TMA

www.texmed.org/Coronavirus/

www.texmed.org/Telemedicine/

[Disaster Planning Toolkit: Preparing for the Unexpected](#)