

COVID-19 ICU PATIENT END OF LIFE FAQs

EVERYONE needs to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer each and every time they enter or exit patient rooms.

Scripting (if needed) to use to prepare families who are about to see their loved one in the ICU.

We understand that losing a loved one is difficult in any situation. We will always try to do our best to meet the family's needs and work with you during this time. Please be prepared that your loved one may look different because of the lines and tubes used in the ICU. This can be frightening especially for children. For your safety, you will need to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer every time you enter or exit your loved one's room. When possible, please refrain from recording or taking photos.

COVID-19 PATIENT VISITATION

Can family members who have been told to stay home because they were exposed to COVID-19 come to the ICU to visit their loved one who is at end of life?

- Once family members pass the screening process before entering the hospital, they can visit their loved one in ICU. Unfortunately, persons who do not pass the screening process will be unable to enter the hospital.
- A mask that covers both the nose and mouth of visitors must always be worn inside the hospital. The mask can be brought from home.
- Any visitor that will be at the patient's bedside must wash their hands, wear a gown, gloves and mask with the help of the ICU nurse.
- ***Scripting example:*** "You'll be able to see your loved one in the hospital after you pass the screening process before entering the hospital. Unfortunately, people who do not pass the screening process will be unable to enter. You'll need to wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth while inside the hospital. You can bring and use a mask from home. After you arrive to the ICU, you need to wash your hands, wear a gown, and gloves. The ICU nurse will be able to help you if needed."

An ICU patient with COVID-19 now has a breathing tube and might die. What communication options are there for family members who are not able to get to the hospital to say goodbye?

- This is an unfortunate situation, but there are some online options for family to say goodbye. The patient's ICU care team members can work with the family to set up FaceTime or WebEx from the family member's home to the patient's room.
- ***Scripting example:*** "We understand that for some families, being at the patient's bedside during this time is very important for you. We have online virtual options such as FaceTime or WebEx so you and your family can see your loved one and be there with them. The healthcare team can help set this up for you and your family."

Can family members come to the ICU to visit a patient who may be at end of life?

- Patients who are at the end-of-life may have a total of 4 family members visit (2 at a time in the room). Special allowances are made if the patient has more than 4 siblings.
- Family members under age 16 are allowed with permission of the patient's health care team.
- Patients will not be allowed any visitors for at least two hours after having their breathing tube removed.
- Family members that are not able to be at the bedside can say goodbye to the patient using FaceTime or WebEx from the ICU Waiting Rooms.
- **Scripting example:** "We will do everything possible to ensure your family's safety while visiting your loved one. A total of four family members (two at a time in the room) will be able to visit your loved one. Special allowances can be made if the patient has more than four siblings. Family members under the age of 16 are allowed with permission of the patient's health care team. For your safety, family members will not be allowed to visit for at least 2 hours after the breathing tube has been removed." "Family that are unable to be at the patient's bedside can say goodbye to their loved one using FaceTime or WebEx from the ICU waiting room, which can be set up by the patient's ICU care team."

Can family members come to the ICU see the body of their loved one who passed away, and how long can they stay?

- Yes, family can see the body of their loved one in ICU, if they can get there within one hour after the patient has passed. If family cannot get to the hospital within one hour, ICU staff can arrange for a virtual viewing using FaceTime or WebEx.
- **Scripting example:** "We will do our best to help you see your loved one, but sometimes this may not be possible. If it will take you longer than one hour to arrive to the hospital, a care team member can help you see your loved one using FaceTime or WebEx."

What precautions do family members need to take after visiting a patient with COVID-19 in the ICU? Will they need to miss work?

- Family members do not need to self-quarantine but should self-monitor for symptoms.
- If any symptoms appear, self-isolate at home and contact health provider.
- Do not need to miss work if the family member feels well but should follow their employer's guidelines.
- **Scripting example:** "After you leave the hospital, you do not need to self-quarantine, but it's a good idea to frequently monitor yourself for symptoms. Pay attention to symptoms such as: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills/sweats, body aches, headache, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and new loss of sense of taste or smell. If you develop any symptoms, you should self-isolate at home and call your health care provider. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. You do not need to miss work if you feel well and follow your employer's guidelines."

SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Can a Henry Ford Health System chaplain come and pray with patients with COVID-19 who are in ICU?

- Yes. Henry Ford chaplains are available for spiritual and emotional support.
- Spiritual support can be done in person or using FaceTime or WebEx.
- Check with nursing if additional support items such as vigil candles (flameless), prayer blankets, printed prayers and other religious items may be provided by the Spiritual Care Team or can be brought in by the family.
- **Spiritual Care Availability:**
 - **Henry Ford Hospital:** Monday through Friday from 7 am until 8:30 pm; Saturdays and Sundays from 9 am until 5:30 pm.
 - ICU staff should contact Spiritual Care at 313-916-2860, or using Halo, can message “HFH Chaplain.”
 - **Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital:** Monday through Friday from 7am until 3:30pm (available by pager until 9pm); Saturdays by pager from 9am-9pm; Catholic priest chaplain available and can come in if needed.
 - Calls to cell phone or pager for immediate needs is the best way to reach Chaplain Services. Spiritual consults can be ordered through EPIC but may not be immediate.
 - Chaplain’s office phone – 734-324-3439
 - Chaplain Karen’s pager – 734-208-1992
 - Fr. Brendan – pager 734-208-7138
 - Fr. Brendan’s cell – 734-752-5848
 - **Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital:** Monday through Friday 9a-5p. Chaplain available on call 24/7 EXCEPT on Sunday between 10am-2pm. On call Chaplain is available during off shift/weekends.
 - To contact Chaplain - call operator at 248-325-1000
 - For non-emergent consults, make referral in EPIC
 - For personal consultation (staff) email Jere dean Nobles, Jim Kraft
 - **Henry Ford Macomb Hospital:** Monday through Friday 9a-3p. On call Chaplain is available during off shift/weekends.
 - To contact Chaplain - call Operator at 586-263-2300
 - For emergent or after hours call operator, or using Halo, contact Jim Kraft
 - For non-emergent consults, make referral in EPIC
 - For personal consultation (staff) email Larry Donald, Diane Rondeau, Jim Kraft
 - **Henry Ford Allegiance Hospital:** Monday through Friday 8a-5p. Chaplain is on call 24/7
 - For emergent needs Contact Spiritual Care at 517-205-4888 or by pager 517-783-7345
- **Scripting example:** “Yes, Henry Ford chaplains are onsite for spiritual and emotional support and are available (*insert availability for individual hospital here*). The Spiritual Care team is working to creatively provide spiritual and emotional support for you and your family during this time. Spiritual support can be done in person or using FaceTime or WebEx. Your loved one’s nurse can help you contact Spiritual Care.”

Can my faith leader come to the hospital when my loved one is dying? Can patients receive last rites or the Sacrament of the Sick during COVID-19?

- Due to visitor limitations, priests and other clergy members are not able to enter the hospital during the COVID-19 crisis.
- The patient's clergy may be called to pray over the phone to bring comfort and reassurance.
- Last rites or the Sacrament of the Sick can only be done by a Catholic priest.
- **Scripting example:** "Unfortunately, due to visitor limitations, priests and other clergy members are unable to enter the hospital during the COVID-19 crisis. You may call your clergy to pray with you, your family, and your loved one, over the phone or by FaceTime or WebEx to bring comfort and reassurance during this time." "Last rites or the Sacrament of the Sick can only be done by a Catholic priest."

If a patient's family member wanted to bring in some religious items to the patient's bedside at end of life, how should they clean the items when they leave the hospital?

- Prior to cleaning, store the item in a plastic bag.
- If cleaning a hard surface (such as metal or plastic):
 - Wear disposable/reusable gloves and wash hands immediately after removal
 - Disinfect the item with a ready to use household disinfectant (following directions for use on the label).
- If cleaning a soft (porous) item:
 - Clean or launder with detergent and warm water if possible.
- **Scripting example:** "Prior to cleaning, store the items in a plastic bag until you get home. If cleaning a hard surface (metal or plastic) wear disposable or reusable gloves and wash hands immediately after removal of the gloves. With gloves on, disinfect the item with a ready to use household disinfectant following directions for use on the product label. If cleaning a soft or porous item, clean or launder with detergent and warm water, if possible. After cleaning, take off the gloves and wash your hands."

FUNERAL HOMES

Will area funeral homes allow a viewing of a person who passed from COVID-19?

- Different funeral homes have different practices. It is best to contact individual funeral homes to find out their policy.
- **Scripting example:** "Because of the crisis, funeral homes practices are constantly changing. It is best to reach out and contact the funeral home directly to see what services they are able to provide you and your family."

When will patients who have passed from COVID-19 be taken to the funeral home?

- This can be different for every patient, based on the funeral home. It is best to contact the funeral home for a possible timeline.

- **Scripting example:** “Because of the crisis, funeral homes practices are constantly changing. It is best to reach out and contact the funeral home directly to find out a possible timeline for when your loved one will be taken to the funeral home.”

If a patient’s family member is not at the hospital when the patient passes, what happens to the patient’s personal belongings?

- The patient’s belongings will be kept safe on the nursing unit, if the belongings are at the patient’s bedside at the time of death. The nurse manager can set up a date and time for the family to pick up the patient’s belongings.
- Belongings that have been moved to Admitting will remain there until the patient’s family member can pick them up. The ICU Nurse Manager will help the family obtain their loved one’s belongings from Admitting, if necessary.
- ICU staff are to place instructions on how to clean the patient’s belongings in with the belongings.
- **Scripting example:** “If you would like, you may bring your loved one’s belongings home with you.” “If not, your loved one’s belongings will be moved to Admitting and will stay there until you or another family member can pick them up. The ICU Nurse Manager will be able to help you get your loved one’s belongings from the Admitting Department as needed. There will be instructions on how to clean their belonging when you return home.”

GRIEF/BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Henry Ford COVID-19 Grief and Loss Support Group

- Conducted via phone on Fridays at 2 p.m.
- To join, call 248-243-3370 and dial code 582633#.
- If no one has joined the call by 2:30 p.m., we will close the call.
- For questions, call Alicia Woodford at 313-556-8736.

Hospice Administration Building, 33464 Schoenherr, Rd., Suite 140, Sterling Heights

- For support group information, call 586-276-9570

Resources for children

- **Sandcastles, 313-771-7005, AboutSandcastles.org**
 - Virtual groups every other week

BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

General helplines

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7) – 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text “talk” to 741741
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Help Line – 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)

Online support

- CompassionateFriends.org
- GriefShare.org (Christian based)
- EmotionsAnonymous.org

Henry Ford Health System Behavioral Health

- Southeast Michigan – 1-800-422-1183
- Southcentral Michigan – 1-800-531-3728
- Call the number on the back of your health insurance card to be referred to mental health services.

Agencies that are free or geared to income

- Wayne State University Psychology Clinic – 313-577-2840
- The University of Detroit Mercy Counseling Clinic – 313-993-1093
- Madonna University Psychology Clinic – 734-432-5493