



Nursing

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

Project ECHO: Preparing the ED for Flu and COVID-19

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10-8-2020

COVID – 19 and Flu

- ED and Beyond (includes transfers and direct admits)

- ✓ Mask everyone—patients, designated support persons, all staff, everywhere

- ✓ Test every adult admit for COVID, Flu A / B

- ✓ Test every pediatric admit for COVID, Flu A / B and RSV

- Infection Control:

- ✓ All ED staff wear N95 and safety goggles and gloves

- ✓ If known COVID negative, all staff wear procedure mask and safety goggles and gloves

- Throughput:

- ✓ 1 hour: Our goal for ED admits to inpatient bed, we must keep ED decompressed

- ✓ ED discharge — follow-up wellness calls to all



COVID – 19 and Flu

- Team Nursing / Cross-training

- ✓ We continue to cross train our staff
- ✓ Nursing leadership, educators, Peri-op, PACU, IR, Cath Lab, advanced practice, out-patient and Peds RNs for adult Med-Surg & ICU)
- ✓ Work with our frontline leaders, staff and union leadership to set expectations and goals
- ✓ Host multidisciplinary operation meetings across all units



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COVID – 19 and Flu

- Supporting Staff

- ✓ Uncertainty and Fear

- Now, less fear of illness
- Much greater fear of surge/over capacity
- “I’m not sure I can do that again...”
- Support staff hotline
- Chaplaincy Programs
- Home routines are not routine!
 - Many hybrid schools
 - Several NY schools just closed and are now all virtual

- ✓ PPE—We have over a 90 day supply of our max use is in storage

- ✓ Sharing the COVID numbers—Staff want to know

- We have had less than 10 COVID patients for several weeks
- Already have had our first Flu +



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COVID – 19 and Flu

- Supporting Staff
- ✓ Debriefed with every patient care unit, respiratory care, nursing educators and leaders and our chief residents across our campus
 - What worked well?
 - Teams—bedside support, scribes, hypoxia team and prone team
 - Clustered Care
 - Communication between teams and families (3 calls a day)
 - Telehealth (both inpatient and outpatient)
 - Fast Testing
 - What needs to be improved or changed?
 - PPE distribution
 - Biomed distribution and management of resources
 - Need larger trash cans
 - Standardize supply locations on units
- ✓ Next Steps: Multidisciplinary Committees
 - Addressing opportunities including work/life balance



COVID – 19 ED Nursing Lessons Learned

- Leadership
 - ✓ Be present – you can't lead from home
 - ✓ Acknowledge fear and build trust
 - ✓ Listen, share stories
 - ✓ Celebrate victories – patient and staff
- Planning
 - ✓ Get to where you want to be
 - ✓ Limit the stress of multiple changes
 - ✓ Cross-train and maintain competencies for potential next wave



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Thank you

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COVID – 19 ED Nursing

Paula Fessler is the Chief Nurse Executive for Westchester Medical Center and MidHudson Regional Hospital. The Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHealth) is a 1,700-bed healthcare system headquartered in Valhalla, New York and located at the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic in NY state. She also is a board member and the Secretary/Treasurer for the American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners. Paula brings more than 25 years of clinical practice as a nurse and family nurse practitioner having worked in Pediatric ICUs, Emergency Departments and in administration at such world-renowned institutions as Duke University Medical Center, St. Louis Children's Hospital and the Mayo Clinic.



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