



Scott Jenquin &lt;scott.jenquin@ascension.org&gt;

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**ASSOCIATE UPDATE: Ascension Wisconsin Guidance for Visitation, Population Masking and Noncompliance**

1 message

**Ascension Wisconsin Communications** <noreply@communications.ascension.org>

Fri, Jun 19, 2020 at 1:44 PM

Reply-To: noreply@communications.ascension.org

To: scott.jenquin@ascension.org

This message contains graphics. If you do not see the graphics, click here to view.

**To:** Ascension Wisconsin Associates**From:** Lisa Benson, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Ascension Wisconsin  
Heather Schimmers, Chief Nursing Officer, Ascension Wisconsin

Handwritten signatures of Lisa Benson and Heather Schimmers.

**Date:** June 19, 2020**Subject:** ASSOCIATE UPDATE: Ascension Wisconsin Guidance for Visitation,  
Population Masking and Noncompliance

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**This communication is being shared today with all Ascension Wisconsin associates.**

Ascension Wisconsin is working to keep our communities healthy during this time and prevent the spread of infection. Ensuring the safety of our associates and providing our patients with the optimal social and spiritual support for healing are important priorities as we continue to respond to COVID-19.

The following information outlines Ascension Wisconsin's updated visitation and masking guidance for our facilities and how to manage noncompliance with this

guidance.

### **Visiting Ascension Wisconsin Facilities:**

- Entry points are limited and a screener is at each entrance.
- Visitors must be at least  $\geq 18$  years of age and all visitors will be screened upon entry to the facility/clinic.
- Visitors who screen positive will not be allowed to enter the facility/clinic and will be provided with the Ascension Wisconsin COVID-19 Hotline phone number: 1-833-981-0711.
- Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin (AMG-WI) clinics will discourage visitation unless necessary for care continuation and/or support during the visit.
- Patients are allowed one (1) designated visitor for the duration of their operative procedure, clinic visit or hospitalization
  - Pediatrics - may have two (2) parents / legal guardians and applies to the emergency department, hospital and NICU
  - Virtual visitation is encouraged
- Visitors are expected to adhere to appropriate social distancing with staff, patients and other visitors.

### **Population Masking - This Refers to All Patients and Visitors (previously referred to as universal masking)**

- As part of aggressive source control measures, the CDC recommends healthcare facilities/clinics should consider implementing policies requiring everyone entering the facility to wear a face mask/covering (if tolerated) while in the building, regardless of symptoms.
- Per CDC guidance, it is permissible for patients/visitors to wear their own cloth face covering upon entering the facility. If a patient/visitor does not have their own cloth face covering, Ascension Wisconsin will provide a patient-facing mask to them.
  - Scripting: "For your safety and those around you, the CDC recommends everyone wear a face mask while in the facility/clinic. Please place this mask on prior to proceeding to your destination and wear until you leave the facility/clinic. Thank you. We appreciate your cooperation."
- Patient-facing masks or cloth face coverings are to be worn for the duration of the visit within the facility. Patients will be instructed when they are able to remove their facemasks by healthcare personnel.
- Patient-facing masks and cloth face coverings should not be placed on children under the age of two (2) years, anyone who has trouble breathing

or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

## Noncompliance

- All associates are empowered to address noncompliance with the above guidelines to promote a safe environment and reduce potential exposures.
- If a patient/visitor refuses to wear a mask, use de-escalation techniques: maintain a calm and supportive approach, make eye contact (remember - you're also wearing a face mask and the person you're speaking with cannot read your facial expression) and listen to their concern, validate and then further educate them about infection risk and concern for other patients. For education on simple de-escalation techniques, **click here**.
  - If they continue to refuse to wear a face mask, ask where their destination is and provide directions.
    - Inform the patient/visitor that you will contact the department and have the leader available to speak to them about possible options.
    - Call the department/leader to alert them that a patient/visitor who has refused to wear a mask is on the way.

If you have questions, please contact your leader.

Thank you.



2020 06 17 de-escalation techniques in color.pdf  
612K





Scott Jenquin &lt;scott.jenquin@ascension.org&gt;

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**Fwd: UPDATE: Ascension Wisconsin Guidance for Visitation, Population Masking and Noncompliance**

1 message

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**Keri Larsen-Berryhill** <keri.larsenberryhill@ascension.org>

Thu, Jun 18, 2020 at 9:17 AM

Reply-To: keri.larsenberryhill@ascension.org

To: SFH Imaging &lt;MILSFHMedicalImaging@wfhc.org&gt;

Everyone please take time to read through the newest visitor guidelines and also the associate support tool. I will be posting/printing for the break room and all 3 reception areas.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ascension Wisconsin Communications** <noreply@communications.ascension.org>

Date: Wed, Jun 17, 2020 at 5:30 PM

Subject: UPDATE: Ascension Wisconsin Guidance for Visitation, Population Masking and Noncompliance

To: &lt;keri.larsenberryhill@ascension.org&gt;

This message contains graphics. If you do not see the graphics, click here to view.



**To:** Ascension Wisconsin Leaders

**From:** Lisa Benson, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Ascension Wisconsin  
Heather Schimmers, Chief Nursing Officer, Ascension Wisconsin

**Date:** June 17, 2020

**Subject:** UPDATE: Ascension Wisconsin Guidance for Visitation, Population Masking and Noncompliance

Handwritten signatures of Lisa Benson and Heather Schimmers.

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**This communication is being shared today with all Ascension Wisconsin leaders.**

As we ramp up our operational and economic recovery "Power-Up Plan" at

Ascension Wisconsin, we will continue to serve our communities and reduce the transmission risk among associates and patients and protect people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications from COVID-19.

Ascension Wisconsin is working to keep our communities healthy during this time and prevent the spread of infection. Ensuring the safety of our associates and providing our patients with the optimal social and spiritual support for healing are important priorities as we continue to respond to COVID-19.

The following outlines Ascension Wisconsin's updated visitation and masking guidance for our facilities and how to manage noncompliance with this guidance.

### **Visiting Ascension Wisconsin Facilities:**

- Limit entry points and place a screener at each entrance
  - Screeners will be provided access to education on simple de-escalation techniques (see attached)
- Visitors must be at least  $\geq 18$  years of age.
- All visitors will be screened upon entry to the facility/clinic.
- Visitors who screen positive will not be allowed to enter the facility/clinic and will be provided with the Ascension Wisconsin COVID-19 Hotline phone number: 1-833-981-0711.
- Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin (AMG-WI) clinics will discourage visitation unless necessary for care continuation and/or support during the visit.
- Patients are allowed one (1) visitor:
  - The patient should designate one (1) allowed visitor for the duration of their operative procedure, clinic visit or hospitalization
  - Pediatrics - may have two (2) parents / legal guardians. This applies to the following settings:
    - Emergency Department
    - Hospital
    - NICU
  - Visitors are restricted for confirmed COVID-19 and PUI patients due to the risk to the visitor. Please encourage and facilitate virtual visitation.
- Local site will determine visitation hours.
  - Overnight visitation should be allowed, as clinically/socially appropriate, especially for pediatric patients, and for women in labor or post-partum.
- Exceptions to these visitor guidelines may be made by the House Supervisor/Administrator On-call/Clinic Leadership as appropriate for the situation, balancing the health risks and patients rights to receive visitors. In



particular, compassionate consideration should be given in cases of terminal or hospice patients.

- Visitors are expected to adhere to appropriate social distancing with staff, patients and other visitors.
- Post visitor and masking requirements signage at all entrances.

### **Recommendations for Managing Visitor Guidelines:** (Two options based on site characteristics)

Options	Description	Pros	Cons
<b>Google Sheet</b>	Google sheet with hospital room numbers with place to document visitor name and today's date. This sheet proactively identifies visitors entering the building, destination and prevents several visitors for admitted patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managed via computers or printed copies by door screeners</li> <li>- Easy to implement</li> <li>- Easy to scale</li> <li>- Easy to train new screeners on this tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manual entry and tracking</li> <li>- Ensure 7 day per week printing of form</li> <li>- Visitors drive who visits patients, rather than patient</li> </ul>
<b>Visual identifier (wristband, sticker, etc.)</b>	Print out additional patient ID band to provide to assigned visitor during admission / preadmission process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Patient is driving who the designated visitor is</li> <li>- Easy to implement</li> <li>- Easy tracking for door screeners with visitor showing visitor band</li> <li>- Already in place at 4 hospitals for 1 consistent visitor per stay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wasteful printing of additional ID bands if allowing 1 visitor per day</li> <li>- How to track the 1 visitor per day</li> <li>- A lot of visitor ID bands to manage for screeners</li> </ul>

### **Population Masking (previously referred to as universal masking)**

- As part of aggressive source control measures, the CDC recommends healthcare facilities/clinics should consider implementing policies requiring everyone entering the facility to wear a face mask/covering (if tolerated) while in the building, regardless of symptoms.
- Per CDC guidance, it is permissible for patients/visitors to wear their own cloth face covering upon entering the facility. If a patient/visitor does not have their own cloth face covering, Ascension Wisconsin will provide a patient-facing mask to them.
  - Scripting: "For your safety and those around you, the CDC recommends everyone wear a face mask while in the facility/clinic. Please place this mask on prior to proceeding to your destination and wear until you leave the facility/clinic. Thank you. We appreciate your cooperation."
- Patient-facing masks or cloth face coverings are to be worn for the duration of the visit within the facility. Patients will be instructed when they are able to remove their facemasks by healthcare personnel.

- Patient-facing masks and cloth face coverings should not be placed on children under the age of two (2) years, anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Post visitor/masking requirements signage at all entrances (**click here for signage**).

## Noncompliance

- All associates are empowered to address noncompliance with the above guidelines to promote a safe environment and reduce potential exposures.
- The following guidelines address implementation of the population masking requirements and processes to address visitor noncompliance with requirements.
  - Post signage at all entrances that address all aspects of visitor guidelines (**click here for standardized Ascension signage**)
  - Staff each entrance point with a screener
    - If visitors/patients do not have a face mask covering, associate is to provide them with a facemask.
    - Scripting: "For your safety and those around you, the CDC recommends everyone wear a facemask while in the facility/clinic. Please place this mask on prior to proceeding to your destination and wear until you leave the facility/clinic. Thank you. We appreciate your cooperation."
    - Screener orientation should include education on simple de-escalation techniques (**click here for details**).
  - If a patient/visitor refuses to wear a mask, use de-escalation techniques
    - Maintain a calm and supportive approach
    - Make eye contact. Remember - you're also wearing a face mask and the person you're speaking with cannot read your facial expression.
    - Listen to their concern, validate and then further educate them about infection risk and concern for other patients.
      - Scripting: "I understand your concern but for your safety and those around you, the CDC recommends everyone wear a facemask while in the facility/clinic."
    - If they continue to refuse to wear a face mask, ask where their destination is and provide directions.
      - Inform the patient/visitor that you will contact the department and have the leader available to speak to them about possible options.



- Call the department/leader to alert them that a patient/visitor who has refused to wear a mask is on the way.
- The leader receiving the unmasked patient/visitor should take them to a secure, private area immediately to discuss with them the rationale for wearing a face mask, address and acknowledge their concerns and provide options for the patient/visitor who refuses to wear a mask.
- If the individual continues to refuse to wear a face mask:
  - **VISITOR:** Inform the visitor that he/she will not be allowed to stay without a face mask on. Provide the option to wait outside or in their car, where they may wait without a mask, and then direct the visitor to this location. If the visitor continues to refuse to comply after options are provided, contact security or designee (if no security personnel present). Security/designee to further de-escalate, up to and including asking the visitor to leave the facility/clinic.
  - **PATIENT:** The leader should take the patient to a secure, private area immediately to discuss options for completing the visit. This could include waiting in an area that is isolated from the general population until the scheduled appointment time or taking them immediately back for their visit/procedure.

## Questions?

If you have any questions, please please contact **Dr. Lisa Benson** or **Heather Schimmers**.

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Keri Larsen-Berryhill BS, RTR

*Manager-Medical Imaging Service*

**Ascension I St. Francis**

3237 South 16th Street

Milwaukee, WI 53215





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## Associate Support

### De-escalation techniques during times of stress

When we are under stress and uncertainty, we may feel a loss of control. In the hospital setting people may feel vulnerable and have lost autonomy. When treatment and medical care directs when to eat, drink, have visitors, people try to find whatever they can to gain a sense of control, even over something that may seem insignificant or unimportant. As we are limiting visitors to our hospital during this time of unpredictability, we may be adding to someone's stress. The circumstances can create a situation where people are frustrated, anxious and scared, the best way to deal with this is to use empathy. Research shows that more than half of our communication is nonverbal. When people can not see our facial expressions, due to masks, face shields, etc. it is even more important that we are conscious of our tone, inflection, and eye contact. Please review these helpful suggestions.

- Make sure you are making eye contact when they are talking. We all need to feel validated and seen. This is what they are needing from you more than anything.
- Introduce yourself and ask their name. Use their name when talking to them. It makes our interaction more personable and lessens the chance of escalation.
- Listen to their concerns without interrupting
- Take a deep breath and remind yourself that you can handle this. This stops yourself from letting your anxiety rise with theirs.
- Use paralanguage while validating their feelings, for example: This must be so frustrating and scary that your "wife, sister, friend" is in the hospital and all you want is to be with her. I promise that our staff will be with her, they will help you call her if able, etc etc.
- I am so sorry you are going through this right now....
- Make sure only one person is talking at a time instead of multiple staff talking at the person
- Avoid using words/phrases like "calm down", "you" "our policy is" they usually escalate the person.
- Keep your voice calm and respectful.
- Treat them as you would want your child, parent, spouse treated who does not understand what is happening and is afraid they will never see their loved one again.
- When all else fails, call the security alert or police and then let them handle the situation.

Remember if their loved one is in the hospital, they may be going home alone and cannot be with other family. They may need someone to listen, if you have the time, stay where coworkers can see you



## **Ascension**

and know where you are, be with that person for a couple minutes, this may diffuse the situation.