



*Newborn Nurses, NBN Infusions, New Behavioral Network,  
New Behavioral Network- Delaware, Inc.*

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### **An Update for Our NBN Community**

Knowledge is critical in the fight against COVID-19. The NBN Group is dedicated to keeping you informed and safe. We will update you as new information becomes available. For example, you've probably heard a lot of these buzzwords recently: COVID-19, self monitoring, exposure, social distancing, face covering, hand hygiene, PPE, screening, etc. We understand that these new terms have taken over our society. We want to help break down what some of these terms mean for you.

Before we go through it all, we want you to know that we are here to assist you and are fully operational. Many team members are working from home, but we are here to serve our community. Select departments are still operating out of the Cherry Hill Office. Rest assured that we are doing everything we can to stay informed in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic and to respond with best practice and expertise.

### **COVID Symptoms and Self Monitoring**

It's extremely important for everyone to be familiar with the symptoms of COVID-19. If you aren't aware of the symptoms, you won't be able to appropriately and swiftly respond. Although there is still a lot to be learned about this new virus, the current CDC list of symptoms includes fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell. The World Health Organization (WHO) also adds tiredness, aches and pains, nasal congestion, diarrhea, and nausea to this list.

We're asking all members of the NBN community, including employees, patients, and their households, to self monitor for any and all of the above mentioned symptoms. Some suggest doing twice daily temperature checks. If at any time you or anyone in your household starts to experience any of these symptoms, please report them to your team member at NBN immediately. We ask this in order to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved in the NBN community. We don't want a sick employee infecting a patient or their family member, or vice versa. If we work together, we can do our best to keep everyone healthy.

### **Social Distancing and Face Coverings**

The best way to stay healthy is to prevent illness. This is especially true for COVID-19! This virus is highly contagious, so the key is to practice social distancing and limit your household exposure. This means no unnecessary trips to the store, limiting the number of people you allow

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in your home to those who live there and medical staff, and keeping your distance when saying hi to your neighbor. It's fine to go outside to take a walk or get some fresh air. It's not fine to hang out at a friend's house or have a small gathering.

If you do need to go to a store for an essential need, like food, you need to wear a face covering (with a few exceptions for those who cannot for medical reasons or age). This is a requirement issued by NJ Governor Murphy. If everyone in the store uses a face covering, the chances of infection from person to person in the store are lower. The CDC website has some easy to follow directions for making a no sew, homemade cloth mask. That all being said, if you can stay home, please do!

### **Hand Hygiene**

As always, it's also important to practice hand hygiene. You should wash your hands before eating or preparing food, after using the bathroom, before and after caring for someone sick, when coming in from outside, and any other time your hands may have been contaminated. If your hands are visibility soiled (like with dirt, for example), you should wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Otherwise, if soap and water are not available, using an alcohol based hand sanitizer and rubbing until your hands are dry is fine. If you do go to a store, in addition to wearing a mask, you should use hand sanitizer as soon as you leave the store, and you should wash your hands when you get home.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

We're all seeing healthcare workers (HCWs) on the news and on social media wearing full PPE, such as gowns, gloves, face shields, N95 masks, etc., and you may be questioning why all NBN HCWs aren't doing the same. It's important to keep in mind that HCWs need to wear this PPE appropriate to the risk level for the care they are providing. These HCWs shown are usually working with COVID-19 patients. This level of PPE is typically not needed for homecare HCWs, unless the patient they are working with has COVID-19. For most of the homecare situations through NBN, facemasks (and at times gloves) are sufficient. There is a global shortage of PPE, so we can only provide PPE appropriate to the risk level for the care provided and dependent upon availability. We are providing PPE as we are able to. Staff, if you need more PPE, please reach out to your supervisor to discuss.

### **Other Things Staff Should Do**

There are a lot of things to keep up with now, especially for families with at risk members. We understand that things may slip people's minds. For this reason, we're also asking our staff

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members to do a beginning of shift COVID-19 screen upon arrival. This screen includes not only assessing the patient for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, but also having a conversation with a caregiver about whether anyone else in the household is showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and also about whether the household has been practicing social distancing and avoiding visitors. Please understand that, by doing this, our staff members are doing their part in keeping themselves, their patients, and their own household members safe.

Also, staff members need to be more mindful than ever of what they bring into a patient's house, and then bring back to their own households. We're asking our staff to keep personal items to a minimum, and to practice excellent infection control techniques with their bags. Don't forget to wipe these bags down!

### **Working Together**

This is not a fun situation for anyone. A lot of us are missing social interactions, visiting family, and stopping at the store. It's hard to give someone an encouraging smile when your face is covered. But, the sooner we all cooperate to stop the spread of COVID-19, the sooner life can go back to "normal". Please understand that NBN wants to do what we can to get back to that, and to keep everyone safe and healthy until that happens. We are proud to announce that we have donated 53 ventilators to a local hospital to help fight this Pandemic. Thank you for working with us to do so. As always, feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you,

*Nicole Gallagher*

Manager of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review

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