

Carolina Village: Epidemic/Pandemic Plan

The following procedure should be utilized in the event of a Pandemic or Epidemic outbreak.

1. All staff members are to be familiar with **Carolina Village's** Epidemic/Pandemic Plan and related policies and procedures.
2. **"CODE PANDEMIC"** should be announced when a novel virus is increasing and sustaining human-to-human spread in the United States and cases are occurring in North Carolina.
 - *Carolina Village's Executive Director will be responsible for announcing "code pandemic" and will notify other key personnel.*
3. The Executive Director will be notified if not on the premises.
 - *The Executive Director will notify department heads and each department head will notify employees within their department*
 - *Employee notification will be sent out via shift wizard messaging for all nursing staff.*
 - *The facility will designate a staff member for family notification*
 - *The community will be notified via mass communication system (i.e. the Hub)*
 - *The facility will post signage at time clocks and on campus kiosks to further alert staff*
4. Community staff should report to the Incident Command Post for briefing and instruction.
 - *The Health Care Area command post will be located in the "Magnolia Room"*
 - *The Independent living command post will be located in "Village Hall"*(*cellphones may be used for back up phone sources and internet hotspot connections)
5. The Designated Person in Charge will assume the command position if the Executive Director is off premises.
6. Follow guidelines of Epidemic/ Pandemic Plan.
7. All prospective residents and employees should be screened to identify exposure to novel infectious respiratory illness. *Screen for fever and respiratory symptoms following exposure for duration of time as specified by the CDC for the infectious respiratory illness. (i.e. 1-5 days for influenza, 14 days for COVID-19 etc..).*
8. Residents, employees, contract employees, and visitors should be evaluated daily for symptoms. Employees should be instructed to self-report symptoms and exposure.
9. Follow Epidemic/Pandemic Plan in regard to managing high-risk employees and guidelines as to when infected employees can return to work.
10. Adherence to infection control policies and procedure is critical. Post signs for cough etiquette. Adherence to CDC recommendations for type of transmission-based precautions (i.e.-droplet precautions) during the care of a resident with symptoms or a confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness is a must.
11. Determine when to restrict admissions and visitations. Communicate this to the affected parties.
12. Contact local and state health departments to discuss the availability of vaccines and antiviral medications, as well as recommendations of usage.
13. Ensure adequate supplies of food, water, and medical supplies are available to sustain the community if epidemic/ pandemic illness occurs in the geographic region or at the community.
14. Cohort residents & employees as necessary.

15. Implement contingency staffing plans as needed.

Epidemic/ Pandemic Plan

Carolina Village shall work closely with the Henderson County Department of Health, local hospitals, and other local agencies to address epidemic/ pandemic preparedness.

Surveillance & Detection

The Director of Nursing and the Infection Preventionist will be responsible for monitoring public health advisories (federal and state) and updating Carolina Village, particularly when epidemic/pandemic illness has been reported in the United States and is nearing the specific geographic location. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, the NC Department of health and human services (NC DHHS) website, and the Henderson County health department website will be utilized as a resource.

The facility will monitor and track illness trends of residents and staff during epidemic/ pandemic illness

- Residents admitted during periods of epidemic/ pandemic illness should be assessed for symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness.
- A system is implemented to daily monitor residents and staff for symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness, as well as confirmed cases of epidemic/ pandemic illness.
- Information from the monitoring systems is utilized to implement prevention interventions, such as isolation or cohorting.
- The above procedures are the same for an epidemic/ pandemic illness outbreak.

Communication

The Executive Director shall be responsible for communications with the public health authorities during an epidemic/ pandemic.

Key local and state contact information:

- **Henderson County Health Department: (828) 692-4223** (*main number*)
- **Henderson County Health Department Communicable Disease: (828) 694-6019**
- **Henderson County Emergency Management: (828) 697-4728**
- **NC Carolina's Communicable Disease Branch: (919) 733-3419**
- **Pardee Hospital: (828) 696-1000**
- **Advent Health: (828) 684-8501**
- **Mission Hospital: (828) 213-1111**

The Executive Director shall be responsible for communicating with the staff, residents, and their families regarding the status and impact of the epidemic/pandemic illness in the community. One voice speaking for the community ensures accurate and timely information.

Communication includes usage of text messaging, phone calls, shift wizard, posted signage, and other forms of communication to notify staff members, residents, visitors, family members, volunteers, and vendors of the epidemic/ pandemic outbreak and about the status of the epidemic/ pandemic illness in the community.

The community shall also maintain communications with the Henderson County Emergency Management, the Henderson County Health Department, local hospitals (Pardee Hospital, Advent health), as well as other providers regarding the status of the outbreak.

The facility will follow CDC and NC DHHS guidelines for reporting confirmed or suspected cases of epidemic/ pandemic illness to local and state agencies.

Communicate with family members and responsible parties prior to an outbreak, so they understand that visitations may be restricted to protect the safety of their loved ones.

- *Carolina Village will notify family members, residents, and responsible parties when a novel virus is increasing and sustaining human-to-human spread in the United States and cases are occurring in North Carolina and/or within the region. Carolina Village will communicate with residents, families, and responsible parties through mailed written literature, email, phone calls, and other forms of communication to ensure they are informed of potential epidemic/ pandemic illness and/or risk of a potential outbreak. Such materials should be developed or obtained from www.cdc.gov.*

Education & Training

Facility will be responsible for coordinating education and training on emerging epidemic/ pandemic illness and outbreaks. Local health department and hospital-sponsored resources are researched, as well as usage of Web-based training programs.

- Education and training of staff members regarding infection control precautions, standard, contact, droplet, and airborne precautions, as well as respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette should be ongoing to prevent the spread of infections, but particularly at the point of first confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness in the North Carolina geographic area.
- Education and training should include the usage of language and reading-level appropriate, informational materials, such as brochures, posters, as well as relevant policies. Such materials should be developed or obtained from www.cdc.gov.
- Informational materials should be disseminated during before and during epidemic/ pandemic illness outbreaks.

Infection Control

- Cleaning and disinfection for epidemic/pandemic illness follows the general principles used daily in health care settings. Carolina Village will use an EPA approved environmental disinfectant that has claims for effectiveness against the specific epidemic/ pandemic pathogen and will follow the product label for appropriate contact times. The facility will follow any additional recommendations and/or guidelines given by the CDC for cleaning/ disinfecting related to the specific epidemic/ pandemic illness.
- Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette should be practiced. The facility will ensure respiratory hygiene stations are posted at facility entrances with “cover your cough” respiratory hygiene signage.
- Staff will utilize appropriate transmission-based precautions when providing care or coming in close contact with symptomatic residents. The facility will follow CDC recommendations and guidelines for the type of transmission-based precautions (i.e.-droplet, contact, or airborne precautions) that must be utilized during the care of a resident with symptoms or a confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness
- *Carolina Village is not equipped with negative pressure isolation rooms and does not house or treat patients with infectious disease requiring airborne isolation (i.e.- active pulmonary TB*

disease). Individuals with suspected or confirmed infectious disease requiring airborne isolation will be placed in a procedure face mask, which must be worn by the patient at all times (even while inside of their room). The individual will be placed in a private room with the room door maintained in a closed position. Individuals will be transferred to the hospital whenever feasible.

- *In the event of widespread epidemic/ pandemic illness in the community, Carolina Village recognizes that hospital bed capacity may be limited and individuals with epidemic/pandemic illness requiring airborne precautions may need to be maintained at the facility. Individuals with suspected or confirmed infectious disease requiring airborne isolation will be placed in a procedure face mask, which must be worn by the patient at all times (even while inside of their room). The individual will be placed in a single private room whenever possible with the room door maintained in a closed position. if single rooms are not available, patients infected with the same organisms can be cohorted (see below for cohorting). Carolina Village will identify a select team of nurses and CNA's to provide care to patients with epidemic/ pandemic illness. Should residents with epidemic/ pandemic illness requiring "airborne precautions" need to be maintained on campus, Carolina Village will contact the Henderson County Health Department regarding fit testing of staff and will follow the health departments guidance and recommendations. Should fit testing be needed, Carolina Village will utilize the "just- in-time" fit testing method for N95 respirator masks for health care staff caring for individuals with an epidemic/ pandemic illness requiring "airborne precautions"*

** In the event N95 respirator masks are not readily available due to supply chain interruptions or excessive demand, Carolina Village will contact the Henderson Country Health Department and follow their recommendations and guidance.*

- During epidemic/ pandemic illness symptomatic residents or groups will be cohorted using one or more of the following strategies:
 - *Confining symptomatic residents and their exposed roommates to their room.*
 - *Placing symptomatic residents together in one designated area of the community.*
 - *Closing units where symptomatic and asymptomatic residents reside, i.e., restricting all residents to an affected unit, regardless of symptoms.*

Residents with pandemic illness should be placed in a single private room when available, if single rooms are not available, patients infected with the same organisms can be cohorted (share rooms). These rooms should be in a well-defined area that is clearly separated from other patient care areas used for uninfected patients. During a pandemic, other viruses may be circulating concurrently in a community. therefore, to prevent cross-transmission of pathogens, whenever possible assign only patients with confirmed pandemic illness to the same room.

- Carolina Village has identified side one of the Medical Center (C hall and D hall) as the designated area where residents with epidemic/ pandemic illness will be cohorted.
- To increase bed capacity in the health care areas, Independent living residents with mild epidemic/ pandemic illness may be cohorted in a private cottage or other designated independent living area that is maintained separate from well resident living areas on campus.
- Whenever possible, healthcare workers assigned to cohorted patient care units should be experienced health care workers and should not "float" or be assigned to other patient care areas.
- The number of persons entering the cohorted area should be limited to the minimum number necessary for patient care and support. Cohort units/ care areas will have entry

doors maintained in the closed positions with an entry log placed at the entrance. Any individual accessing or entering a cohort unit/ care area will be required to sign in on the entry log. Furthermore, meal delivery will be completed by staff assigned to provide care within the cohort area as indicated.

- If airborne isolation is recommended and a negative pressure room is not available, place the resident in a private room, with the door closed, and have the patient wear a surgical mask.
- Carolina Village will close the health care areas to admissions of non-village residents during epidemic/ pandemic illness outbreak. Carolina Village has specified this criterion to be one confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness.
- Carolina Village will cancel large group gatherings, meetings, activities, and close common spaces such as the dining rooms during epidemic/ pandemic illness outbreak. Carolina Village has specified this criterion to be one confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness.
- Ensure visitor limitations and restrictions are enforced.

Occupational Health

- Policies shall be developed that addresses the needs of symptomatic staff and community staffing needs:
 - staff members who develop symptoms while at work: *Staff members should immediately report any symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness to their supervisor and put on a face mask. The Director of Nursing, Administrator, Executive Director, and the Infection Preventionist must be notified of any employee who develops symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness. The facility will follow the most recent recommendations and guidance given by the CDC, NC DHHS, and the Henderson County Health Department for the handling of staff members who develop symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness while at work.*
- Staff members who need to care for ill family members with symptoms of and/or confirmed epidemic/ pandemic illness will be treated as exposed individuals and the facility will follow the recommendation and guidance given by the CDC and NC DHHS for quarantine period, incubation period, and duration of illness, for the specific infectious disease responsible for the epidemic/ pandemic outbreak, to determine when staff may return to work.
- Determine when staff may return to work after having epidemic/ pandemic illness:
 - *The facility will follow the recommendation and guidance given by the CDC and NC DHHS for quarantine period, incubation period, and duration of illness, for the specific infectious disease responsible for the epidemic/ pandemic outbreak, to determine when staff may return to work. Carolina Village will consult with the facilities Medical Director and the Henderson County Health department to determine when individuals will be allowed to return to work.*
- During times of epidemic/ pandemic illness staff will be allowed to utilize sick time, vacation time, and personal time interchangeably to cover missed work days, in addition to utilizing short term disability and FMLA as warranted.
- A contingency staffing plan shall be identified that recognizes the minimum staffing needs and prioritizes critical and non-essential services, based on residents' needs and essential community operations. The staffing plan includes collaboration with local and regional planning and response groups to address widespread healthcare staffing shortages during a crisis.

- Carolina Village will educate staff to self-assess and report symptoms of epidemic/ pandemic illness before reporting to duty.
- Carolina Village will make a list available to staff of Mental health services or faith-based resources that are available to provide counseling to staff during epidemic/ pandemic.
- Encourage and monitor staff for vaccinations related to epidemic/ pandemic illness
- Monitor and manage high-risk employees (pregnant or immuno-compromised) by placing them on administrative leave or altering their work assignments.

Vaccinations & Antiviral Usage

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), The NC Department of Health and Humans services (NC DHHS), or the Henderson County Health Department will be contacted to obtain the most current recommendations and guidance for the usage, availability, access, and distribution of vaccines and antiviral medications during an epidemic/ pandemic.
- Guidance from the State Health Department shall be sought to estimate the number of staff and residents who are targeted as first and second priority for receipt of epidemic/ pandemic vaccine or antiviral prophylaxis. A plan is in place to expedite delivery of vaccine or antiviral prophylaxis.

Preparedness of Supplies & Surge Capacity

- Quantities of essential food, materials, medical supplies, and equipment shall be determined to sustain the community. A predetermined amount of supplies is stored at the community.
 - *Carolina Village will maintain a two-week surplus of essential food, materials, medical supplies, and equipment that will be available to sustain the community. The community will monitor supply levels and re-order additional supplies as indicated and at the onset of pandemic declaration.*
- Carolina Village will maintain close communications with local hospitals (Pardee hospital and Advent health), the Henderson County Health Department (HCHD), Department of Social Services (DSS), NC Department of Health and Human services (NC DHHS), Emergency personnel, and other health care facilities regarding space capacity needs during an epidemic/ pandemic outbreak and assist in community assistance efforts as necessary and able.
- Determine capacity for deceased residents, including a space to serve as a temporary morgue.
 - In the event space is needed on campus to serve as a temporary morgue site; Carolina Village has designated the “Club House”, located at the back entrance of the campus to serve as this site.

Certain Phases of a Pandemic Alert requires should include specific precautions:

1. When a novel strain of infectious illness has been detected in the United States with increased and sustained human-to-human spread:
 - a. All prospective residents and employees should be screened if they have had recent travels or close contact with other ill persons who have recently traveled to a previously affected geographic area with novel infectious epidemic/ pandemic illness.
 - b. Initiate infection control training for Epidemic/ Pandemic Preparedness.
2. When a novel strain of Infectious illness is increasing and sustaining human-to-human spread in the United States and cases are occurring in North Carolina:
 - a. All prospective residents and employees should be screened to identify exposure to novel infectious epidemic/ pandemic illness. *Screen for recent travels or close contact with other ill persons who have recently traveled to a previously affected geographic area with novel*

infectious epidemic/pandemic illness. Screen for fever and respiratory symptoms following exposure for duration of time as specified by the CDC for the infectious illness. (i.e. 1-5 days for influenza, 14 days for COVID-19 etc..).

- b. Residents, employees, contract employees, and visitors should be evaluated daily for symptoms. Employees should be instructed to self-report symptoms and exposure.
- c. Manage high-risk employees and guidelines as to when infected employees can return to work.
- d. Adherence to infection control policies and procedure is critical.
- e. Post signs for cough etiquette. Adherence to CDC recommendations for type of transmission-based precautions (i.e.-droplet, contact, or airborne precautions) during the care of a resident with symptoms or a confirmed case of epidemic/ pandemic illness is a must.
- f. Determine when to restrict admissions and visitations. Communicate this to the affected parties.
- g. Contact local and state health departments to discuss the availability of vaccines and other necessary medications, as well as recommendations of usage.
- h. Ensure adequate supplies of food, water, and medical supplies are available to sustain the community if pandemic illness occurs in the geographic region or at the community.
- i. Cohort residents and employees as necessary.
- j. Implement contingency staffing plans as needed (Centers for Disease Control, May 2006).

A federal Web site offers information at www.pandemicflu.gov