In-home Care Workers – Guidance for ADS Providers

Updated 4/3/2020

For current COVID-19 information in Seattle-King County, visit www.kingcounty.gov/COVID.

Providers and should report known cases and suspected clusters to Public Health using COVID 19 Intake Survey. Anyone can report cases or clusters with the online form.

Employee and Client Safety

To promote a safe and healthy work environment, Home Care Agencies should follow protocol for any employee working with home care clients.

Agency Supervisors should direct their staff to ask themselves the following questions.

"Do you have any of the following:"

- A new fever (100.4°F or higher), or a sense of having a fever.
- A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- New muscle aches (myalgias) that you cannot attribute to another health condition, or that may have been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)
- In the last 14 days, have you had close contact with a person who was known to be COVID-19 positive at the time you had close contact with them?

NOTE: Close contact for healthcare exposures is defined as follows:

a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters), of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time (such as caring for or visiting the patient/client, or sitting within 6 feet of the patient in a healthcare waiting area or room); or

b) having unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions or excretions of the patient/client (e.g., being coughed on, touching used tissues with a bare hand).

***If an employee answers YES to any of the screening questions, then:** The employee must notify their supervisor immediately and they should not be working with home care clients.

ads Aging and Disability Services
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Exposure Risk

- *High-risk* exposures refer to a person who have had prolonged close contact with patients/clients with COVID-19 and were exposed to material potentially infectious with the virus causing COVID-19.
- *Medium-risk* exposures generally refer to a person who had prolonged close contact with patients with COVID-19 who were wearing a facemask while HCP nose and mouth were exposed to material potentially infectious with the virus causing COVID-19.
- *Low-risk* exposures generally refer to brief interactions with a person with COVID-19 and there is no direct contact with the client.
- *Self-monitoring* means caregiver monitors themselves for fever by taking their temperature twice a day and remains alert for respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue). Anyone on self-monitoring should know who to contact if they develop fever or respiratory symptoms during the self-monitoring period to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.

Scenarios

1. An employee of a home care agency has been in close contact with someone who was exposed to COVID-19, but neither individual is showing symptoms.
   Action: Continue to work, monitor symptoms twice a day, if symptoms emerge, stop immediately, and self-isolate.

2. An employee of a home care agency has been in close contact with someone who was later diagnosed with COVID-19 (could be a client, co-worker other) but was asymptomatic at the time of contact with the employee.
   Action: continue to work, monitor symptoms twice a day, if symptoms emerge, stop immediately, and self-isolate.

3. An employee of a home care agency has been exposed to a diagnosed person with COVID-19, but the employee does not show symptoms.
   Action: Continue to work, if symptoms emerge, STOP.

4. An employee of a home care agency is showing symptoms of COVID-19.
   Action: Employee should discontinue working, contact their health care provider, and self-isolate

5. An employee of a home care agency has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
   Action: Stay home, contact their doctor, self-isolate

Guidance was compiled from the following sources and intended to support aging network providers:

- Centers for Disease Control
- WA State Department of Health
- Public Health Seattle-King County

Please note that information changes daily and consult the above sources for the most current information.