



COVID-19 and the Workplace

November 9th, 2020

Prioritizing Access to COVID-19 Vaccine



Chronic Conditions¹

People with several chronic conditions are more likely to experience dangerous symptoms if infected.

These include type 2 diabetes, severe obesity and heart disease. High blood pressure and type 1 diabetes may increase risk of symptoms.



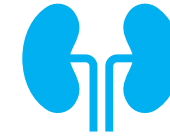
Cancer and Certain Blood Disorders¹

People who currently have cancer are at higher risk of developing more severe illness from COVID-19. Those with sickle-cell anemia or thalassemia are also at higher risk for developing complications.



Weakened Immune Systems¹

Conditions such as bone marrow transplant, HIV/AIDS, long-term use of prednisone or similar drugs that weaken the immune system.



Chronic Kidney or Liver Disease¹

Those with chronic kidney disease and/or on dialysis.



Socioeconomic Factors²

Long-standing health and social inequities have put many people from racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.²

- Emphasize compliance with treatment, prevention and provider relationships
- Use data to know your population and risk levels
- Maintain flexibility for employees to return-to-work when they feel safe

¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-who-is-at-risk/art-20483301#:~:text=People%20with%20several%20chronic%20conditions,COVID%2D19%20symptoms.>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>

What Roles Increase Exposure to COVID19?

- Working-from-home is only available to **29%** of Americans
- Three factors determine the risk of contraction at work: contact with others, physical proximity and exposure to disease and infection



Contact with others¹

Those in roles that require workers to be in contact with others as they perform it



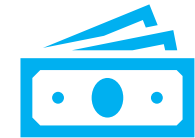
Physical Proximity¹

Those that must complete tasks in close proximity with others



Exposure to Disease and infection¹

How often does the job require exposure to hazardous conditions.



Low Paid Workers²

Employees that are lower paid often risk more exposure through their work but also live in larger households, thus potentially exposing others.

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/occupations-highest-covid19-risk/>

² <https://www.brookings.edu/research/reopening-america-low-wage-workers-have-suffered-badly-from-covid-19-so-policymakers-should-focus-on-equity/>

Addressing COVID-19 Long Haulers

The treatment protocols for how providers manage those with severe and moderate symptoms of COVID-19 are evolving



Updates

Long Haulers have prolonged symptoms and recovery from COVID-19

Details

- CDC reports 1/3 of those infected with COVID-19 do not recover in expected timeline
- 20% of 18-34 year old's with no underlying conditions are not getting better within expected 2-3 weeks
- 25% of post discharge individuals are not recovering as expected

Impact and Considerations

- Long-term cost and productivity impacts are unknown
- Recognize prolonged absence and disability may impact a significant portion of COVID-19 infected employees and family members
- Consider work accommodations and leave and benefits adjustments to support recovery

Sources: <https://www.modernhealthcare.com/patient-care/covid-long-haulers-suffer-symptoms-weeks-months-later>;
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2771111>
; <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2020/09/28/long-covid-post-coronavirus-syndrome-recovery-symptoms-column/3552751001/>

COVID-19 Vaccine Program

Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program:



- Program run by Health and Human Services
- Covers harm resulting from vaccine
- High threshold for proving a relationship between an injury and the vaccine
- No-fault system

Employers:



- Vaccine Sponsor
- Vaccine Campaigns
- Required or Voluntary
- Injuries claims already emerging

Vaccine Court



- Orders payouts for claims
- Mandated to pay awards quickly and easily

Testing Updates

Testing for COVID-19 is continually evolving and includes multiple modalities. The main types of testing are Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), Antigen, Antibody, and Pooled testing

Updates



Antigen Testing



Details

- Abbot Binax Antigen test
- Faster and cheaper alternative to PCR test
- For virtually all Antigen tests,
 - a positive result is quite reliable
 - a negative result, is less reliable
- Results are most reliable when used on symptomatic individuals
- Dramatic increase in supply is expected
- Positive results do not rule other infections
- Provider order required for administration



Impact and Considerations

- Consider how to take advantage of Antigen testing as another tactic in your COVID-19 screening and testing plan. Develop tactics to accommodate for:
 - Use as an alternative to PCR Test
 - Contact tracing program still a must
 - Incorporate follow-up PCR test when individual tests negative

Employers Adapt to COVID-19

Assessment and Customization



Assessment

- Inventory and prioritize worksite locations, employee groups and workforce culture/routines
- Location and group-specific readiness analysis



Customization

- Site-specific playbook development to address local regulatory and workforce issues
- Local & centralized responsibility matrix
- Education and training planning and preparation
- Identify and prepare for increased onsite safety and health measures
- Intervention protocols to address COVID-19 exposure
- Site-specific resource planning and wind-down criteria

Communication & Execution *Staged by site*



Communication

- Employer communications and training plan
- Employee communications
- Communications with local authorities
- Comprehensive tracking and reporting



Employee Assessment

Clinical Examination Components*

- COVID-19 Health Questionnaire
- Physical assessment/temperature screen
- Basic Lab Tests
- Point-of-Care COVID-19 Test

* Components to be customized to employer requirements

- Consistent approach
- Timely relevant communication between employer, employee and local authorities

Monitoring & Management *Ongoing*



Monitoring

- Clear protocols for daily monitoring of all employees
- Remove all new high-risk employees until proven COVID-19 negative
- For positive COVID-19, initiate internal contact tracing and exclusion from worksite until proven COVID-19 negative; report to local public health authorities
- All COVID-19 positive return to work only after re-examination, re-testing, and asymptomatic for 72 hours
- Site exposure response protocol



Reporting Routines

- Exam completion rates & summary results
- COVID-19 status across entire organization
- Pandemic lost-time reporting

Aon Screening for Return To Work Resources

Below are the cross-functional team resources:

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Contact Tracing Overview

SC Note: Need to discuss to better my understanding how we need to edit this slide

What is it?¹

- Traces and monitors contact of infected people and notifies of exposure
- Supports the quarantine of contacts to prevent additional transition
- States, tribes, localities and territories are establishing large cadres of contact tracers
- Adoption of digital tools may expand reach and efficacy

Impact

- If done efficiently, holds significant promise in reducing spread of the virus – in some populations can reduce infectivity by up to 85%²

Current Uses

- Traditional public health tactic used when a diagnosed individual with a communicable disease is deemed highly infectious and has high risk of morbidity and or mortality
- Employers currently support contract tracing based on public health, safety and labor regulations; typically a manual function

Opportunities and Considerations

- Digital applications are likely to improve accuracy and speed, enhancing the efforts to control spread COVID-19³, thereby contributing to economic recovery
- CDC issued guidelines to help evaluate digital contact tracing apps on May 20th¹
- Biggest challenge will be to balance protecting workforce/public health risk and personal privacy rights



¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/contact-tracing-resources.html>

² Ferretti L, Wymant C, Kendall M, et al. Quantifying SARS-CoV-2 transmission suggests epidemic control with digital contact tracing. *Science*. 2020

³ Morely, J et al, Ethical guidelines for COVID-19 tracing Apps, *Nature* 582: 29-31 4 June 2020: