



coronavirus (COVID-19)

March 30, 2020

We are currently living and working in an unprecedented time with challenges that would have been unimaginable not long ago. As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to evolve, the Premier Health team is working tirelessly to cover the myriad of components associated with this quickly evolving crisis.

Our commitment to safeguarding the health of our patients, visitors and staff is our highest priority. I want to assure you that our clinicians are prepared to screen for risk of COVID-19 and respond to help prevent further spread, and we are prepared to identify, isolate, and treat potential patients who seek care at our facilities. We are monitoring this situation daily and working collaboratively with healthcare partners at the local, state, and federal levels. Guided by our mission and values, we stand ready to care for our community, some of whom may be your employees, family members, friends and neighbors.

At this complex and stressful time, we are working diligently to make access as easy possible, and I would like to share a few of them with you that may be helpful.

Telehealth Options Available:

In order to minimize the risk of exposure to yourself and others, if you or a member of your team experience symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath, flu like symptoms), we suggest these steps:

For established patients with a Premier Physician Network primary care provider, we have several avenues for safe and easy access. We ask that you first call your physician office to understand the most appropriate way to receive the care you need. Our convenient options include a variety of telemedicine appointments available to you: scheduling an **e-visit via MyChart®**, or scheduling a **virtual video visit** with your provider, which is currently expanding across all of our physician practices. Please do not go directly to the emergency room or your doctor's office without calling first, since many can isolate at home without being evaluated in person. **For those who may need a doctor, we are currently taking new patients and we have a fast, seamless process that can be accessed online at premierhealth.com/schedule or by calling 855-PREMIER.**

As an alternative, **Premier Virtual Care** is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at www.PremierVirtualCare.com. Virtual Care provides the opportunity to video chat with a health care provider, minimizing the risk of exposure. While a diagnosis of COVID-19 cannot be confirmed virtually at this point, our health care teams can evaluate your risk for the condition, answer your questions, and recommend next steps. If we suspect you are at medium or high risk for COVID-19, we will refer you, as appropriate, for further testing and outline any appropriate immediate treatment steps. If you are at low or no risk, the health care provider will advise you on home self-care or other appropriate treatments.

In an effort to minimize the risk of exposure to yourself and others, **Premier Health Urgent Care** facilities have temporarily modified our patient arrival and check-in process. We ask all patients and/or support persons to remain in your vehicle upon arrival and call the phone number listed on the urgent care door to speak with a member of our care team. The staff will ensure appropriate check-in and will provide an estimated wait time. You will be notified when it is appropriate for you to enter the facility for evaluation and care. Please visit our website to learn more about our convenient Urgent Care locations and hours of operation.

Patient Triage and Emergency Department Procedures:

Our hospitals are following CDC guidelines to identify and isolate patients who might be contagious, and to prevent unnecessary exposure to other patients and visitors. To ensure optimal preparedness for the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, and to keep all of our patients safe and their wait times as short as possible, Premier Health has established protocols to triage patients at hospital entry points, as well as a process for safely moving patients through the facility while in isolation. Patients who have a cough, fever, sore throat, or are experiencing shortness of breath will be asked to enter the emergency department

through an alternate entrance. We have put up signage - and also tents, in some cases - at our emergency department entrances as part of this process, which will remain in place for the foreseeable future.

If you have chest pain, difficulty breathing/shortness of breath, dizziness, a severe headache, or other potentially life-threatening problems, please call 911. We ask that you do not go to your local emergency department for COVID-19 testing as the emergency department is for patients who need the most critical care.

Specimen Collection and Testing:

To meet the high demand for COVID-19 testing, we have set up a collection site in the University of Dayton Arena parking lot. This site offers a process to collect specimens only from patients who have a physician order with them for a COVID-19 test to be performed. To ensure an orderly process, it is vitally important that those who have symptoms that are consistent with the COVID-19 virus first contact their family physician or primary care provider and work with their provider's office to see if they meet certain criteria before they come to the collection site. Those who visit the site with a physician's order will be checked to see if they have a fever and other symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Those who are asymptomatic might not be tested, even if they have a physician's order. Please check our Coronavirus Resource page on our website (www.premierhealth.com/coronavirus) for details, as collection site operating hours may fluctuate.

Ways to Help:

Many of you have reached out to express your support for our dedicated health care team who is on the front lines. It means so much, and we thank you deeply for your care and concern. Our community has consistently demonstrated grit and resilience when faced with adversity, and the current health crisis is no exception. Some have asked how you can further assist. Please know your offers are most welcome and are of immeasurable value. **Please visit our website (www.premierhealth.com/coronavirushelp) to learn more about the many ways you can help in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.**

There are critical shortages of personal protective equipment. Premier Health is doing everything possible to remedy this situation, but getting vital equipment and supplies is difficult due to global demand. While elected officials have been trying to find various solutions, additional actions are necessary. Your voice in this matter is important. Please join us to advocate on behalf of our dedicated health care personnel on the front lines.

Our region has long been known as a hub of creativity and innovation, and this longstanding legacy remains a source of pride and a beacon of hope today. We need local scientists, researchers, engineers, and manufacturers now more than ever. We ask you to check your inventory for available supplies to donate to help our frontline first responders and local hospitals. We also ask you to assess your organization's ability to retool and convert production that might enable you to manufacture the critically needed protective gear, supplies, and equipment needed to battle the coronavirus pandemic in our community. As we all work together to battle this health crisis, everyone makes a difference.

Above all, we hope this finds everyone at your company safe and well. You can rest assured that at Premier Health, our care lives here for you – now, and when we've come through this crisis together. We are confident in the resilience of this community, and we thank you for your ongoing trust and support. It is of immeasurable value to us.

Sincerely,



Mary Boosalis
President and CEO

 coronavirus (COVID-19)**Available Resources:**

We know you likely have questions and concerns. Below are several additional resources available to find regular updates and to help navigate the latest information on COVID-19:

- World Health Organization (WHO)
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>
- Ohio Department of Health
<https://www.coronavirus.ohio.gov>
1-833-4-ASK-ODH (Staffed from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day)
- Premier Health – Coronavirus Resource Page
<https://www.premierhealth.com/coronavirus>

Your local public health department and news outlets also offer many resources, specific to the region.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we recommend you practice the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face (particularly your eyes, nose and mouth) with unwashed hands.
- Practice social distancing. Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with others.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Consider virtual work environments and/or virtual meetings, when possible.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Adhere to guidelines and recommendations of the CDC as well as state and local health officials.