

A Letter to Our Patients



We have a caring community of health care professionals at Good Shepherd Health Care System (GSHCS) and we want the best outcomes for our patients and our employees, so we are always striving to deliver care in a safe, efficient and compassionate way. With guidance and collaboration with state and local organizations, we hope to deliver the best care possible during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

In an effort to keep our patients informed, we are sending you this letter with current information about changes happening at GSHCS, how we as a health care system are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and what you should do if you have questions or concerns.

With the continued spread of the COVID-19 infection, and both the Oregon State and United States Governments declared States of Emergency, GSHCS has enacted precautionary response measures in an effort to keep our patients and staff safe. We are working closely with Umatilla County Public Health (UCo Health), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and are following guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to prepare our health care system.

Providing a safe environment for our patients and staff is of the upmost importance and thus GSHCS has implemented a no visitation policy as a protective measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We understand the importance and value of patients having access to their loved ones while receiving care in our hospital and clinics, and though we have restricted visitation at this time, we encourage patients and loved ones to communicate via phone and video calls whenever possible.

We realize that some exceptions need to be made, and have prepared the following guidelines for those exceptions:

- Minor children requiring care in the hospital or at a clinic/ outpatient site will be permitted one parent/guardian per patient, one at a time throughout the day with no more than two parents per day
- Family Birth Center — one care partner during length of stay
- Patients receiving end-of-life care where death is imminent as identified by a physician or advance practice provider — no more than two visitors in our facility per every 12 hours
- Patients requiring a legal guardian to make medical decisions on their behalf — one care partner during length of stay
- Patients requiring a care partner for self-management — one care partner during length of stay

For these limited exceptions, visitors must be 18 years or older, and be free of fever, cold or flu-like symptoms. All visitors will be screened at entrances to enforce these restrictions.

In addition to restricted visitation, access into the hospital and clinics is limited to specific doors. We request that our patients enter campus via the Elm Street entrance where you will be subject to a brief screening in order to direct you appropriately for your services needed.

Locations for entering our facilities will be limited to the following doors and hours:

- Emergency Room Entrance (Open 24 hours)
- Entrance A (GSMG Clinic) 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. or earlier, dependent upon when appointments are completed
- Entrance C (Pharmacy Entrance) 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- Good Shepherd Medical Plaza Entrance 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. or earlier, dependent upon when appointments are completed
- Columbia Professional Plaza (Front Entrance) 7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. or earlier, dependent upon when appointments are completed

You may be receiving a call from your physician's office if you have an upcoming clinic visit and/or surgical procedure as we are postponing many non-urgent, planned surgeries and procedures until further notice. Some visits may be conducted virtually (as a video or phone visit) with your provider depending on the medical services you are seeking.

Education Department scheduled activities are suspended and postponed through May 1, 2020. If you have a question about upcoming Education Department classes or meetings, please call 541-667-3509 or email healthinfo@gshealth.org.

Good Shepherd Home Medical Equipment is open for your medical equipment needs and we are encouraging patients to call ahead to 541-667-3477 for inventory checks, payment and to arrange for curbside pickup at 435 NW 11th Street during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.). Good Shepherd Home Medical Equipment is also on call for delivery of beds, oxygen and other necessary medical equipment.

In an effort to support social distancing and reduce the number of individuals arriving to campus, Good Shepherd Clinic Pharmacy will provide free prescription delivery services to our patients' households. Patients may call the Good Shepherd Clinic Pharmacy at 541-667-3652 to request this service and make appropriate arrangements. For those patients who would like to utilize curbside delivery at the pharmacy, they are welcome to park at the curb closest to the Pharmacy—Entrance C, and call 541-667-3652 for a curbside delivery of their prescription(s).

Additionally, we have temporarily closed our Cafeteria to the public, in accordance with the guidance from Governor Brown.

Each of these precautions is in place to reduce the number of individuals coming to campus and prevent our patients, staff, and community from potential exposure to illness. As a reminder, our hospital is here for all your emergency care needs per usual, and our Emergency Room is open 24 hours. If you have a medical emergency and are able to come in, please do so and/or call 911.

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new virus strain that is believed to spread in similar ways as the common cold. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. A health care provider can give you instructions for seeking care.

According to the CDC, the risk for exposure in the United States is in an accelerated phase and our community has reported COVID-19 cases. We continue

to follow established infection prevention protocols and remain prepared to care for patients should a surge in cases occur.

Our health care system is working closely with our state and local health authorities to care for potentially affected individuals while taking steps to limit person-to-person spread within our communities. We have protocols in place, including training our staff and practicing for these scenarios. Constant monitoring and necessary precaution measures to ensure the safety of our patients, caregivers, visitors and community members have been put into place.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes and to what extent it may spread in the United States. According to the CDC, here's what we know about the spread of the virus and what respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette to practice:

- Sanitize your hands often for at least 20 seconds each time. Alcohol gel works well (like after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose), but hand washing with soap and water also works well.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. You can also cover your cough with your elbow if no tissue is available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home if you are sick and do not need medical care.
- Routinely disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily.

For general questions about COVID-19, please reach out to Umatilla County Public Health at 541-278-5432 or the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) hotline by dialing 211 from a cell phone (not a landline).

IF YOU FEEL ILL & SUSPECT COVID-19

- If you have traveled to a country on the CDC list of level 2 or 3 travel health notices and you suddenly developed a fever and cough, call your health care provider.
- If medically stable, please stay home if you have flu like systems. At the present, these symptoms are more likely due to influenza or other respiratory viruses than to a COVID-19 infection. Whether you have seasonal flu, the common cold, or something else, it's important you stay away from others when sick.
- Monitor yourself and if you begin to develop more acute symptoms such as fever, coughing and shortness of breath or you believe you may have been exposed to Coronavirus, you should:
 - Call ahead to your primary care provider as soon as possible, which helps to determine the most appropriate care.
 - Call Uco Health at 541-278-5432 and/or dial the OHA hotline at 211 from a cell phone (not a landline).
 - Call 911 for a medical emergency.

STAY INFORMED WITH THESE RESOURCES

There are several agencies closely monitoring the situation. You may find more information about their preparedness, general information about the virus, and up to date news at the following websites:

cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV

govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19

co.umatilla.or.us/health

We appreciate our patients' partnership as we each do our part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities during this challenging time. For up-to-date GSHCS information, please visit the GSHCS Facebook page or www.gshealth.org.