

COVID Survivors in the Inpatient Rehab Unit - Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated 5/15/2020

1. How was the criteria for admission to the Rehab Unit determined?

The admission screening criteria has been vetted through the Infection Prevention System Director. The criteria and level of isolation are based on current IDPH and CDC recommendations. The infection prevention experts who developed our criteria are the same group who determined the procedures being followed in the COVID units.

2. Why are we not requiring COVID testing for patients in the unit?

COVID survivors admitted to ARC are known positives. The current COVID testing is a PCR test that does not distinguish between live and dead virus. There is a possibility the test will still result as “detected” despite the patient no longer having symptoms. The admission criteria will focus more on the CDC symptom-based strategy (at least 10 days from symptom onset, fever free for 72 hours without fever reducing medication and improving respiratory function).

3. Why are we only requiring 10 days from onset of symptoms when the recommendation for self-isolation is 14 days?

Exposure to COVID: Once a person is exposed they could develop symptoms anywhere from 2-14 days from exposure. This is why an individual would self-isolate for 14 days.

Positive COVID: Our patients are known COVID positives therefore we are following the CDC symptom-based strategy (see #2 above) for discontinuation of precautions.

CDC recommendations are in a fluid state. We will adjust accordingly as they are updated.

4. Why are some Post-COVID patient not isolated?

The CDC symptom-based strategy allows for discontinuation of precautions after 10 days from symptom onset, fever free for 72 hours without antipyretics and improvement of respiratory symptoms.

5. What if we cannot verify when the patient's symptoms started?

We will use the date of the positive COVID test.

6. Can Post- COVID patients be cohorted?

Yes, after 10 days from symptom onset, fever free for 72 hours without antipyretics and improvement of respiratory symptoms, CDC no longer requires further isolation precautions.

7. Why are we admitting COVID patients in the Rehab unit?

These patients are considered COVID survivors who no longer require acute medical care, but who cannot return home as they are in need of rehabilitation services to work toward their ideal level of functioning.

8. What are we doing to prevent COVID transmission on the unit?

- Additional screening of referrals – the Infection Prevention Department will be involved along with the Admission Coordinator(s) and Medical Director to approve COVID survivor admissions to the Rehab Unit
- Appropriate PPE is available to staff
- ARC is following the approved cleaning and disinfection processes available on the Clinician Portal
- Patients are encouraged to mask
- Staff education on proper adherence to isolation precautions and use of PPE

9. Why are the COVID survivors who are still finishing their isolation not in the COVID unit?

Currently, PT and OT are not performed in the COVID units. In order for COVID survivors to begin their therapy as soon as possible, it is more beneficial to continue isolation in the Rehab unit. We are utilizing the same isolation precautions and PPE for these patients as the COVID units.

10. Please ask your Manager or refer to the Clinician Portal if you have additional questions.