Pharmacy Employer Guidance

Overview

As the Coronavirus continues to spread across the country, the likelihood that one of your employees will test positive for COVID-19 increases. While some guidelines for this scenario exist, there are few one-size-fits-all recommendations. Each state and locale will have different requirements and consequently, each pharmacy or practice setting will need to respond differently. Below are some best practices for prevention as well as some recommendations on what to do if an employee tests positive (+) for the virus. In addition, you can visit the NCPA Coronavirus Resource Center (https://ncpa.org/coronavirus-information) for additional information.

Best Practices—Prevention

- Stay current on Coronavirus activity in your area
- Sanitize regularly (wipe down everything); consider setting a timer to remind employees to wash hands and wipe down commonly touched surfaces hourly
- Employees should wear gloves, if available.
- If space allows, place barrier table or clear shower curtain in front of the pharmacy counter to ensure at least 6 ft separation between staff and patients.
- Utilize drive thru/curbside/home delivery to reduce risk of in-store exposure.
  - o Use senior living tools (i.e. The Grabber) at drive-thru window
  - o Consider placing meds on hood of car to minimize face-to-face interaction with curbside pick-up
- Employees may write COVID-19 on signature pad on behalf of patients when allowed by PBMs.
- Monitor employees daily for symptoms.
- Implement split team approach if staffing levels permit to limit staff exposure with each other. Consider assigning staff to one workstation during shift to minimize community spread.
- Cross train front-end personnel.

What To Do If An Employee Exhibits Symptoms or Tests Positive

- Under the law as it stands today, there is no requirement to close the pharmacy if an employee tests positive or displays symptoms.
- Send the employee with symptoms to self-quarantine for 14 days or until the employee proves he is COVID-negative. May require physician note to return to work.
- Notify other staff that an employee has gone home with symptoms or positive test.
- Conduct daily symptom check-ins with employees. Don't allow an employee to enter the pharmacy if he/she has a fever, shortness of breath or cough. Be aware that not all infected individuals exhibit a fever.
- Offer a liberal leave policy for other staff members who may have been affected and/or choose to self-quarantine.
- Deep clean/ sanitize all surfaces using approved disinfectants. This should include work surfaces, equipment, phones, pens, clipboards, credit card machines, door handles, sliding windows, shared spaces, etc.
  - o Set reminders to regularly sanitize on an hourly basis.
- Adjust operating hours as needed depending on staffing level.
  - o Report any change in operating hours including temporary closings to state boards of pharmacy.
  - o As a courtesy, notify area physicians of any changes to your operation
- Contact local schools of pharmacy to solicit student help. APPE students needing hours to meet graduation requirements may be interested and willing to assist. For more information, visit https://www.covidbestpractices.com/act.