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Dear Member:

Important Maine DHHS BinaxNOW Guidance Update

This week the Maine DHHS provided an update regarding the use of BinaxNOW Antigen Test cards. Due to increased prevalence throughout the state of Maine, there have been two changes to the Guidance for the approved use of BinaxNOW in Maine.

The major change is that **Maine DHHS will no longer recommend a PCR test to confirm a positive BinaxNOW Antigen test in a symptomatic individual.**

In addition, Maine DHHS will no longer recommend a PCR test to confirm a positive BinaxNOW Antigen test when used for serial testing of asymptomatic critical infrastructure. As a reminder, under this scenario, critical infrastructure who are identified as a close contact of a confirmed case are serially tested to allow them to continue to work as long as they remain negative on the test. Critical infrastructure workers are limited to the following categories: Healthcare Workers, Education and First Responders. The Abbott BinaxNOW Ag Test Card Guidance referenced above can be [here](#).

MHCA Creating Vaccine Resources

MHCA is busy working on a resource packet for member facilities that will include links and reference documents to assist as vaccine clinics begin across the state. This resource packet will include staff focused FAQs, public facing posters and fact sheets for each vaccine and the process of vaccination clinics. Please keep a look out for this resource packet coming soon.

Was it Close Contact? Feedback from the Maine CDC

According to Maine CDC HAI Coordinator Carrie Rice, when looking at if a healthcare worker needs to quarantine it is two parts:

1. Did they meet the 6-15 (6 foot-15 cumulative minutes in 24hrs) rule and then also look at what the "exposed" healthcare worker was wearing for PPE and what was the "positive" person wearing for PPE.
2. Using the chart from the Maine CDC [exposure checklist](#) which expands upon the Federal CDC guidance, you can use this chart to match up what the HCW was wearing and what the COVID-19 positive or PUI was wearing.
 3. If the exposure example is in the green then there is no specific work restriction.
 4. If in yellow, then there should be a review of the situation to see if there was anything that happened during the interaction that may increase risk and warrant quarantine.
 5. If in red, then quarantine is warranted.

In summary, quarantine is not warranted if you merely happen to be working within facility that might be housing a COVID-19 PUI or positive person and you didn't have on a N95/eye protection. Additionally, while N95s are recommended as preferable over surgical masks, along with eye protection, gown, and gloves when in a COVID quarantine or positive space; federal CDC has stated surgical masks should be used when N95s are not available.

Notice of Agency Rule-making Proposal: 10-144 C.M.R., ch. 101, MaineCare Benefits Manual

CHAPTER NUMBER AND TITLE: Chapter(s) II and III, Section 19, Home and Community Benefits for the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities

CONCISE SUMMARY: This rule is proposed to align and comply with 42 C.F.R. 441.301(c), the federal Home and Community Based Settings rule, referred to as the Settings Rule. Additionally, the changes update certain Personal Support Services (PSS) and other reimbursement rates pursuant to the State supplemental budget, P.L. 2019, ch. 616. Pursuant to Resolves 2019, ch. 104, the changes permit spouses to be reimbursed as a Personal Support Specialist for eligible members that need extraordinary care. The rule clarifies roles and responsibilities of the Service Coordination Agency (SCA), the Fiscal Intermediary (FI), and the Assessing Services Agency (ASA) Assessor. It adds or clarifies definitions for Extraordinary Care, and the Person-Centered Planning Process.

See <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/rules/index.shtml> for rules and related rulemaking documents.

Comments must be received by 11:59 PM on January 15, 2021.

Thank you for all you do to care for your residents and staff.

Nadine L. Grosso
Vice President and Director of Communications
ngrosso@mehca.org