Universal Testing - Frequently Asked Questions
(Updated 7/13/2020)

- **If the patient being admitted was recently discharged and tested on their previous admission, do they need to be tested again?**
    - If a patient who has previously tested negative is readmitted and the original test was >72 hrs. in the past, the test should be repeated.
    - For patients who previously tested positive retesting is not required on admission. Those who tested positive within 21 days should be placed in COVID precautions. Those who are more than 21 days from their positive test do not need to be placed in COVID precautions. Further information on management of persons who have tested positive can be found in the following documents.
        - https://www.nebraskamed.com/sites/default/files/documents/covid-19/inpatient-and-outpatient-isolation-duration-guidance.pdf?date=06172020
        - https://www.nebraskamed.com/sites/default/files/documents/covid-19/intermittent-viral-shedding.pdf

- **Should I wait for a test result to determine whether a patient goes to a COVID or Non-COVID floor?**
    - No, patients should be dispositioned based on their symptomatology. Asymptomatic patients should be transferred to a non-COVID unit. Patients should not be held in the emergency room awaiting results prior to disposition to their inpatient unit.

- **What if a patient refuses the test?**
    - Refusal should be documented in One Chart and the ordering team should be notified of the patient's refusal.
    - The ordering team should communicate with the patient the intent of testing all admitted patients to attempt to have them comply with this current standard for admission.
    - Patients who refuse to be tested and do not have symptoms or other suspicious findings will receive care on a non-COVID unit. Universal masking and eye protection should be worn.
    - Patients with clinical suspicion for COVID 19 should be admitted to the COVID unit for care. Personnel will work the patient to obtain appropriate testing.
    - In instances where it's unclear whether symptoms are related to COVID, the on call COVID infectious diseases team should be consulted to assist in determining the appropriate level of care (i.e. COVID unit vs non-COVID unit).
    - Performance of elective aerosol generating procedures may be postponed at the discretion of the proceduralist team in the instances patients continue to refuse testing.

- **Does the universal testing protocol apply to pediatric patients?**
    - All pediatric and neonatal patients should be tested unless they are new deliveries within our institution. Testing of those patients is dictated by current OB/NICU guidelines.

- **If a patient has had a recent COVID test at an outside institution, does it need to be repeated?**
    - Patients who have recent (<72 hours) testing at an accepted lab do not need repeat testing performed at Nebraska Medicine. A list of accepted labs can be found here.

- o   If patients have had recent testing but not from one of the accepted labs, it should be repeated by a Nebraska Medicine lab.
- o   Patients with positive tests should be managed as previously outlined.

- **Should patients with visitors have repeat testing?**
  - o   Patients with visitors should follow the same testing protocol as other inpatients

- **Should rapid testing be used for admission screening?**
  - o   Due to limited supply, rapid testing should be reserved for emergent needs as outlined in the policy and the order. Screening of asymptomatic admissions should occur utilizing the standard COVID test.

- **Who should order the screening test?**
  - o   The admission screening test should be ordered by the admitting provider. If in the ER, the order should be released, and specimen obtained as soon as possible

- **What happens if the screening test isn't ordered in the ER?**
  - o   If specimen collection is not completed in the ED, it should occur as soon as possible upon patient arrival to the inpatient unit.

- **What is the process for testing direct admissions from the clinic?**
  - o   The admission screening test should be ordered, and sample obtained at the earliest possible time. If feasible, this should occur in the ambulatory environment prior to arrival in the inpatient setting. If this is not possible, the order should be placed by the admitting team and collected as soon as possible upon patient arrival to the inpatient unit.

- **How do I know if the test has been ordered?**
  - o   A column called "COVID 19 admission screening" can be added into a system list in One Chart that shows the status of the test as:
    - ▪   Ordered, Resulted, Missing Screen, Signed & Held, or In Process

Value	Ico
Resulted	✔
Missing Screen	✖
Ordered	⧗
Sign&Held	◷
InProcess	⧖

- **Can patients with unknown COVID 19 status share a semi-private room?**
  - o   Patients with unknown COVID 19 status including those with pending results should not be placed into a semi-private room until their COVID status is known.

- **What precautions should be taken while test results are pending?**
  - o   Patients should be cared for with universal masking (mask for clinician and patient) and clinician eye protection.