Regional health care institutions align on protective measures for COVID-19

HOUSTON – Regional health care providers in the Texas Medical Center, the largest medical complex in the world, are committed to protecting the health and safety of patients, visitors, employees and members of the community during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Institutions are working together to proactively implement measures that can serve to decrease transmission of the virus and “flatten the curve,” which aims to extend new cases over a longer time period to avoid overwhelming the capacity of the health care system.

To accomplish this goal, institutions are calling on anyone visiting a hospital or any health care site to seriously consider the following:

- **Patients and visitors should plan ahead.** Check your institution’s website for specific visitor policy information.
- If patients are not feeling well, they should contact their care team for direction before traveling to the appointment.
- If visitors are not feeling well, they should stay home.
- Most institutions only allow **two visitors at a time**, per patient. Visitors **must be 18 or older** and **cannot have symptoms** of fever, cough or shortness of breath.
- Allow extra time as **building entrances have been reduced and health screenings are taking place at these entrances.** Screenings include questions about recent travel, current health and a possible temperature check.
- People who do not have a critical reason to be at the hospital or health care site should stay home.
- The best way to prevent the spread of germs is proper hand hygiene and cough etiquette. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

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