



Department of Nursing  
Policy #046

**Collaborating with Clinical Practice Agencies to Promote Safety and Prevent Spread of Infection During an Epidemic or Pandemic**

<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Effective:</b>	6.2.2020
<b>Initiated by:</b>	Chair, Department of Nursing
<b>Relevant WAC/ Standards/References:</b>	AACN Statement on Practice-Academic Partnerships CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations

**Introduction and Background**

In March 2020, the Governor of Washington State issued a proclamation to enforce a stay-at-home policy in response to the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in Washington State.. The Washington State Department of Health Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) received confirmation from the Governor’s Office that nursing students are considered essential within this proclamation.

The NCQAC has advised that the proclamation may be interpreted to create experiences in clinical facilities with strict implementation and monitoring following clinical protocols aligned with public health guidance. This Department of Nursing policy details the procedures related to providing safety to students, faculty, clinical nursing staff, patients and their families from COVID-19 and other infections during a viral pandemic, while providing nursing care at clinical agencies.

The current pandemic crisis requires the Department of Nursing to cooperate with clinical agencies to create a safe clinical practice environment. The future nursing workforce is dependent on adequate clinical training of nursing students to provide safe and effective nursing care. Heritage University is committed to working with clinical partners to fulfill their needs for a future workforce.

Nursing students are perceived by the majority of our clinical partners as valuable members of the healthcare team, who contribute to the provision of care in hospitals and community healthcare settings. Student placement and level of involvement in the patient care arena must be determined synchronously with respect for clinical facility boundaries and healthcare institutional policies that consider well-established transmissibility data and morbidity/mortality data.

For COVID-19 critical data regarding transmissibility, morbidity, and mortality is still evolving, as is the need to make important decisions regarding care given in clinical agencies. As of March 20, 2020, it has been advised by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) to continue clinical experiences in healthcare facilities, in the interest of safety, to limit student direct care of known or suspected cases of COVID-19 infection until better epidemiologic data are available.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is twofold:

1. To provide guidelines to clinical faculty and students for promoting safety to students, faculty, clinical nursing staff, patients and their families from COVID-19 and other infections during a viral pandemic, while providing nursing care at clinical agencies.
2. To provide clinical practice agencies with a document that outlines what HU Department of Nursing expects of students and clinical faculty regarding personal safety from infection and limiting spread of infection in the clinical facility.

### **Plan**

The HU Department of Nursing is committed to collaborating with clinical practice agencies to provide a safe and healthy environment for all patients and their families, for nursing and other clinical facility staff, and for HU students and clinical faculty. To ensure this, the Department of Nursing has developed a safety policy with procedures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All members of the HU Department of Nursing are responsible for implementing this plan. In addition, nursing faculty will collaborate with clinical agencies to assure nursing students and clinical faculty comply with clinical facility safety procedures. The goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in every environment in which we function. Mitigating potential for transmission requires full cooperation among everyone in the Department of Nursing, and compliance with clinical agencies' policies and procedures. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and safeguard the health of all persons, and promote safety from transmission with infection in all our learning and work environments.

In consort with recommendations from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2020), "other than limiting direct care of COVID-19 patients, students in clinical settings may continue their roles as part of the care team." Also, as guided by AACN, the HU Department of Nursing Chair will communicate regularly with the local Yakima Health District, State of Washington Department of Health and other healthcare facilities for updated guidance to make changes to this policy as needed. The HU Department of Nursing will remain flexible, based on public health guidelines and the needs of all our community partners.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) shortage concerns persist. It is recommended that student clinical assignments that require the use of PPE should be deferred in order to protect the clinical facility supply of PPE.

### **Policies and Procedures**

All administration, faculty, staff and students are responsible for implementing and adhering to all aspects of this COVID-19 safety policy. This policy follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Washington State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines and federal Occupational Health and Safety (OSHA) standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- orientation of students and faculty to clinical procedures that promote safety from the specified epidemic or pandemic contagion,
- screening procedures including:
  - pre-screening for identification before clinical facility visitation
  - prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious persons present at the clinical facility,
- conduct at the clinical facility,
- hand hygiene,
- respiratory etiquette,
- minimizing resource consumption and maximizing resources,
- communications and training, and
- ongoing evaluation and corrective action.

### ***Orientation and Preparation of Students and Faculty***

HU Nursing students and clinical faculty will receive training about the best practices regarding isolation of COVID-19 patients, PPE options and how to reuse PPE safely. Though caring for COVID-19 patients is not advisable at this time, students and faculty require information about how to safely conduct themselves in the clinical facility where nurses are caring for COVID-19 patients.

All students and clinical faculty will be oriented to evidence based clinical procedures relating to nursing care in the time of COVID-19 through the following training, in this order:

1. Students and clinical faculty will take the IntelyCare's COVID-19 Nurse Training Certification. This training program covers the top safety practices for caring for patients with COVID-19 through an interactive nursing course.
  - Students and faculty will log into the course through: <https://www.intelycare.com/covid-19/training/>
  - Upon completion, the participant will receive a personalized COVID-19 certification.
    - The student will:
      - print the certificate and turn into their clinical faculty supervisor prior to going to the clinical facility and
      - upload the certificate to a portal on *MyHeritage* for the clinical course.
    - Faculty will transmit the certificate electronically to the Department Chair, with a copy to the Department Coordinator.
2. Students and clinical faculty will take the American Nurses Association Webinar: Be Confident Protecting Yourself and Providing the Best Care to Your Patients during this COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Students and faculty will log into the course through: <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/disaster-preparedness/coronavirus/education/ana-covid-19-webinar-series/>
  - Upon completion, the participant will take a screenshot of the message that they have completed the webinar.
  - The student will:
    - print the screenshot and turn into their clinical faculty supervisor prior to going to the clinical facility and
    - upload the screenshot to a portal on *MyHeritage* for the clinical course.
  - Faculty will transmit the screenshot electronically to the Department Chair, with a copy to the Department Coordinator.
3. Before beginning clinical assignments, clinical faculty supervisors will assure that students have been oriented to:
  - Clinical facility policies and procedures on Isolation
  - Clinical facility policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 if available
  - Washington State Hospital Association Isolation Precaution Signage for Droplet Contact recommended for use for COVID-19
  - Any facility COVID-19 PPE Guidelines if applicable

### ***Screening Procedure***

All clinical nursing faculty and students will be informed of the procedure to self-monitor for risks for, and signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following procedure will be implemented to assess health status prior to leaving home and entering the clinical facility where nursing care will be provided.

- **Step 1:** At home, within two hours prior to the start of nursing care in the clinical facility, all nursing students and clinical faculty will conduct the pre-nursing care screening procedure using the BSN Program Flu and COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire (see form attached) which will be updated as needed.
  - If a student answers “yes” to any item on the screening questionnaire, they should not proceed to the clinical facility. They should contact their clinical faculty.
  - If a clinical faculty answers “yes” to any item on the screening questionnaire, they

should not proceed to the clinical facility. They should contact the clinical course head and the Department of Nursing Chair.

- Step 2: Decision to leave home and proceed to the clinical facility
  - Individuals who screen negative as determined by the screening procedure (no answers of “Yes” to any item on the screening questionnaire) will proceed to the clinical facility.
  - Individuals who screen positive as determined by an answer of “Yes” to any item on the screening questionnaire, will immediately notify their supervisor, and not proceed to the clinical facility.
    - Students will immediately notify the clinical faculty supervisor. The student will stay home, and not proceed to the clinical facility.
    - Faculty will immediately notify the course head and also the Department Chair. The faculty will stay home, and not proceed to the clinical facility.
    - If other recommendations are made, the person is strongly encouraged to follow the specific instructions.
  - If after review the individual screens positive as determined by an answer of “Yes” to any item on the questionnaire, medical follow-up would be recommended per Washington State DOH “Guidance for daily COVID-19 screening of staff and visitors” (see below).
    - Students will be evaluated by the course head and faculty supervisor for whether the student may return to clinical practice following the CDC guidelines for “When it’s safe to be around others: ending home isolation” (see CDC reference “What do to if you are sick” below).
- Step 3: After arriving at the clinical facility, but before proceeding to the clinical practice unit, all students and faculty will undergo additional screening by completing the BSN Program Flu & COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire (see form attached).
  - If after review the individual screens positive, the student/faculty will not proceed to the clinical practice unit. They will be prompted to seek medical follow-up, as outlined by recommended per Washington State DOH guidelines.
  - If after review the individual screens negative, the student/faculty will proceed to the clinical unit. And forward to
- Step 4: If, within two weeks of providing nursing care at a clinical facility, a nursing student or clinical faculty has confirmed COVID-19, the Department of Nursing Chair will communicate with the appropriate administrator at the clinical facility.
  - The Department Chair will collaborate with the clinical facility to obtain permission for any individual to return to the clinical practice agency.
  - Individuals may return to clinical practice under the guidance of the Department Chair, following the CDC guidelines “When it’s safe to be around others: ending home isolation” (see CDC reference “What do to if you are sick” below). The Department Chair will collaborate with the clinical facility to obtain permission for the individual to return to the clinical practice agency.

### ***Conduct at the Clinical Facility***

- ALL students and clinical faculty will check in at the clinical site as per the site’s policies and procedures including but not limited to temperature checks at the point of entry.
- All students and clinical faculty will arrive less than 30 minutes prior to proceeding to the clinical unit and depart immediately after completing the assigned clinical shift, promptly leaving the clinical facility.
- All participants will sign and complete the BSN Program COVID-19 Log, including time of arrival and time of departure.
- Clinical faculty will collect and forward logs to be kept in the office of the Administrative Coordinator for Nursing, and will be available on request to the clinical practice agency.
- Students and clinical faculty will proceed directly to and from the location of their clinical practice. No other buildings at the clinical facility may be visited without prior

approval from faculty and/or clinical facility administration.

- All students and faculty will be required to wash their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility.
- Instruction in the World Health Organization (WHO) handwashing procedure will be reviewed, and on arrival to the clinical unit students and faculty will use it to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water throughout the time at the clinical facility, but especially upon arrival on the clinical facility, prior to any mealtimes and after using the toilet.
- Hand rubbing with an alcohol-based formulation may be used throughout the time on the clinical facility if hands are not visibly soiled. Work areas may have hand rub dispensers (a 60% or greater alcohol-containing preparation of liquid, gel or foam designed for application to the hands) that can be used for hand hygiene at the beginning and end of any activity.
- Students will not participate in or directly observe any aerosolizing procedures on patients that would require additional protective PPE due to the higher risk of corona virus transmission, i.e. Code Blue-CPR.

### ***Respiratory Etiquette***

- All students and clinical faculty will cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.
- Students and clinical faculty will avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

### ***Minimizing resource consumption & maximizing resources***

- Faculty and students will minimize time in the clinical facility by leaving promptly when patient care assignments and post-conference are complete. If necessary, faculty may schedule virtual post-conferences to as to minimize time and place demands at the clinical facility.
- To minimize burden on nursing staff, faculty to student ratio for second semester sophomores and first semester juniors will not exceed 1:3 during the time of the highly contagious pandemic virus, so as to provide adequate supervision by an expert supervising nurse faculty clinician over more novice students. Faculty to student ratio of second and third semester juniors, and first semester seniors will not exceed 1:6. Faculty are to remain on the clinical unit engaged in supervising safe nursing care by students nursing at all times.
- Students must wear uniforms and uniform shoes, as designated in Policy 039 - Dress Code. Jewelry, a fomite for microbes, shall be removed before performing hand hygiene.
- Nursing faculty will limit student direct care to patients who do not have known or suspected cases of COVID-19 infection.
- Students will wear personal protective equipment as designated by clinical facility policy and procedure, and always under the supervision of a HU clinical faculty supervisor.
- The clinical facility will notify the HU Department of Nursing if the facility is unable to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for nursing students and faculty. In that case, HU will provide necessary PPE for nursing students and clinical faculty.
- Nursing students and faculty are prohibited from using other persons' personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, offices or other personal learning or work tools and equipment without appropriate decontamination.

### ***Communications and Training***

This policy will be communicated to all clinical facilities, students, faculty, staff and administration. Necessary training will be provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing and

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provided as new knowledge about COVID-19 safety emerges.

***Ongoing Evaluation and Corrective Action***

Department of Nursing Faculty and the Department of Nursing Evaluation Committee are to monitor how effective the program has been implemented. At the end of each session at the clinical facility the faculty supervisor will complete the BSN Program COVID-19 Policy Implementation Evaluation.

- The evaluation checklist will be reviewed weekly by the Department of Nursing Evaluation Committee; the committee will recommend corrective action as needed.

**Policy Reviewers**

Proposed revisions of this policy should be reviewed by:

1. Nursing Faculty Assembly
2. Policy & Bylaws Committee
3. Curriculum Committee
4. Admissions, Retention, Progression & Graduation Committee

**Forms**

- BSN Program Flu & COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire
- BSN Program COVID-19 Log
- BSN Program COVID-19 Policy Implementation Evaluation

**References**

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (March, 2020). Policy Brief: U.S. Nursing Leadership Supports Practice/Academic Partnerships to Assist the Nursing Workforce during the COVID-19 Crisis. Retrieved from <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Policy/Policy-Brief-US-Nursing-Workforce-COVID-19.pdf>

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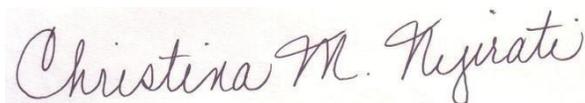
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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## BSN Program Flu & COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_ Current time: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you currently experiencing any of the following symptoms:

Y/N Fever of 100.5 F (38 C) or above , or possible fever symptoms like alternating shivering and sweating

Y/N New chills

Y/N New trouble breathing, shortness of breath or severe wheezing

3. Are you currently experiencing any of the following symptoms:

Y/N New cough

Y/N New muscle aches

Y/N Sore throat

Y/N Diarrhea

Y/N New loss of smell or taste, or a change in taste

4. Have you been exposed to anyone who has tested positive or is under investigation for COVID-19?

Y/N: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

May 15, 2020

## BSN Program COVID-19 Log

Course/Activity Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Time in	Screening questionnaire completed? Y/N	Time out
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
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26.			
27.			

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## BSN Program COVID-19 Policy Implementation Evaluation

Course/Activity Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Check if the following were implemented. If the answer is no, please comment below.

- |            |                                                                                                            |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Y/N: _____ | pre-screening for identification before arriving to clinical facility                                      |
| Y/N: _____ | prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious persons present in clinical facility         |
| Y/N: _____ | conduct in clinical facility                                                                               |
| Y/N: _____ | Adherence to clinical facility policy and procedure related to safety from infection and infection control |
| Y/N: _____ | respiratory etiquette                                                                                      |
| Y/N: _____ | social distancing                                                                                          |

Comments:

Were there any barriers to following the policy? If yes, please explain.

Do you have any suggestion for providing more clarity in this procedure? If yes, please explain.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_