

## MedStar Health Academic Affairs

### COVID-19 Pandemic Educational Gatherings Policy July 1, 2020

#### PURPOSE

In order to ensure the safety of all of our associates, learners, and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have established the following guidelines related to all Clinical Learning Environments (CLEs) within all MedStar Health entities. These guidelines are subject to all pertinent jurisdictional (DC, Maryland, Virginia) regulations in effect at the time of the gathering. Changes to this policy may occur based on the trajectory of the pandemic response.

#### DEFINITIONS

Education-related gatherings are defined as activities that form part of or are related in any way to clinical education, whether on-campus (at MedStar entities or University facilities) or off-campus; likewise, within hospitals or other entities such as outpatient offices, surgery centers, etc. Examples include team meetings (including morning report, rounds, rounding, etc.), staff meeting (inpatient and outpatient) conferences, seminars, symposia, journal clubs, simulation or procedure or wet labs, orientation activities, boot camps, recruiting activities, and graduation ceremonies, among others.

#### GUIDELINES

The following guidance is based on input from clinical and educational leaders in Graduate and Undergraduate Medical Education, with input from MedStar Quality & Safety, Infection Prevention/Infection Control, and Infectious Disease.

***In general, education-related in-person gatherings outside of routine patient care activities should be minimized to the extent feasible, regardless of gathering size, in preference of alternative virtual means.***

#### Virtual Gatherings

Any virtual meeting or conference or similar event that includes protected health information (PHI) in any form must be conducted on a HIPAA-compliant platform (MedStar Webex, Teams, Bluestream). At the present time, Zoom that is generally available - including Zoom offered through Georgetown University - is not HIPAA compliant.

#### In-Person Gatherings

In-person educationally-related gatherings should only be considered when the educational or meeting objectives **could not otherwise be met virtually**. Considerations for in-person gatherings include:

- **Size of gatherings:** Limited to a maximum of participants as guided by jurisdictional and/or MedStar policies in effect at the time of the gathering.
- **Distancing:** Physical/social distancing protocols (with a goal of maintaining 6 or more feet of distance from others) must be employed at all times, and planning must take into account the size of the room in which the gathering will occur.
- **Face masks:** Participants must wear a **face mask** for the duration of an in-person gathering. Guidelines for type of face mask include:
  - o Gatherings occurring in patient care areas: Surgical or procedure masks.
  - o Gatherings occurring in non-patient care areas: Cloth masks may be utilized as an alternative.
  - o Gatherings occurring in non-patient care areas where it is more challenging to achieve adequate distancing (e.g., van transportation of a group of learners from hospital to SiTEL): Surgical or procedure masks should be utilized.
- **Food & Drink:** Refreshments should **not be offered** for consumption during the course of an in-person gathering, as this has been identified as a relative area of vulnerability for appropriate physical/social distancing protocols and continuous face mask use. "Grab-and-go" refreshment options are an alternative.

## SAMPLE SCENARIOS

- **Example 1: Monthly Journal Club** – Should occur as a virtual gathering, as goals & objectives *could be met through alternative virtual means*
- **Example 2: Pig trachea cricothyroidotomy lab** – Consider alternative (virtual) options first, then consider in-person gathering if it is difficult to achieve goals & objectives outside of in-person gathering, provided all of the criteria outlined above are met
- **Example 3: Simulation training** exercise with SimMan or similar advanced patient simulator – Consider alternative (virtual) options first, then consider in-person gathering if it is difficult to achieve goals & objectives outside of in-person gathering, provided all of the criteria outlined above are met
- **Example 4: Fellowship Graduation** – Should occur as a virtual gathering, as goals & objectives *could be met through alternative virtual means*
- **Example 5: Oral boards Simulation** exercise – Should occur as a virtual gathering, as goals & objectives *could be met through alternative virtual means*

Any questions or areas for clarification can be directed to MedStar Academic Affairs.