DATE: January 6th, 2022

TO: Washtenaw County Long Term Care Facilities

As of December 20, 2021 the CDC reported that the Omicron variant had been detected in a majority of states, including Michigan. Omicron appears to be highly transmissible with the potential for rapid spread. It is unknown if Omicron will cause more severe illness compared to Delta and other variants, but current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths. In addition to the current MDHHS guidance, Washtenaw County would like to emphasize several important steps that our congregate care facilities can follow to help reduce Omicron transmission and mitigate illness in their residents and staff.

**Isolation / Quarantine**

Residents

- **Isolation:** As per CDC guidelines for high-risk congregate settings, Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) recommends a 10-day isolation period for all residents. The updated CDC guidelines for the general population are intended for the general population and not for congregate setting with vulnerable populations.

- **Quarantine:** As per CDC guidelines for high-risk congregate settings, Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) recommends a 10-day quarantine for residents, regardless of vaccination and booster status.

Staff

- We recommend following the CDC Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (link).

- To mitigate staffing shortages, we recommend following the CDC Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages (link).

**Use of Masks**

- Masks are a critical part of slowing down the spread of the Omicron variant. We recommend that all residents, visitors, and healthcare personal should be wearing masks regardless of vaccination status. We recommend that healthcare personal wear KN95 or N95 masks as available and at a minimum a surgical mask. Clinical staff that is caring for COVID+ or PUI patients should continue to follow their facility, state, and national PPE guidelines.
Therapeutics

Monoclonal Antibody Administration

- Positive residents may qualify for monoclonal antibody administration (mAb therapy).
- Monoclonal antibody therapeutics may be procured through your pharmacy and hospital partnerships.
- At this point, it is assumed that Omicron is the dominant strain in Washtenaw County. Sotrovimab appears to remain effective against this variant.
- Please note that sotrovimab is in extremely limited supply across Michigan.

Oral Antiviral Medications

- Paxlovid and Molnupiravir (oral antiviral medications) are new options in the fight against COVID-19. These are now available to keep your residents from progressing in their disease.
- These medications are effective in preventing hospitalization and death in COVID+ patients with mild to moderate illness. For additional information, see the FDA fact sheets (Paxlovid [Link], Molnupiravir [Link])
- Especially with the current Omicron surge, WCHD recommends that your facility strongly considers the use of these medications in your residents who have mild to moderate COVID disease.
- Please note that both these medications are now available on an extremely limited basis through designated Meijer Pharmacies under an emergency use authorization.
- Currently, Washtenaw County has one pharmacy in Ypsilanti that has both Paxlovid and Molnupiravir available. Please review availability using the following website [https://rx.meijer.com/covid19/therapeuticprogram](https://rx.meijer.com/covid19/therapeuticprogram). There are also other Meijer Pharmacies in neighboring counties that may have availability.
- We strongly recommend that your facility’s medical director screen your COVID+ residents for eligibility (see attached eligibility criteria). If they meet criteria, the medications can be prescribed through Meijer’s pharmacy (see attached requirements, prescribing instructions, and standardized prescriptions). You may need to call the pharmacy to confirm availability.
- If your facility is not currently operating under the guidance of a medical director, please reach out to Washtenaw County for additional considerations.

Regards,

Juan Luis Marquez, MD, MPH
Medical Director