

New mask mandate for Holton Hospital staff

(MSC News)--Holton Community Hospital is requiring all personnel wear medical-grade masks as of Wednesday, October 28th.

CEO Carrie Saia announced in a news release that the decision was made based off current Kansas Department of Health and Environment data showing an increase in COVID-19 test positivity rates over the previous two-week period, coupled with the rise in positive cases. Patients and visitors will still be allowed to wear cloth masks.

“We believe given the current upward trend of positive cases and the County’s positivity rate of 13.42% for the preceding two-week period, it is imperative for our organization to require a heightened level of mask usage.” Saia said. She said the organization developed an internal plan several months ago designed specifically to address issues for additional safety practices in preparation for increased community spread of the virus and to allow the organization to safely operate. “We now consider the County to be in a “Yellow or Moderate” Risk level (10% to 14.99%) based off the current positivity rate. We will continue to implement this phase until the County’s positivity rate falls below 10% for a two-week consecutive period,” Saia said.

Saia noted the plan also addresses staffing, additional PPE requirements for each department and visitation guidelines.

Chief of Medical Staff Dr. Malia Warner stated, “By taking this action, we continue to be ready to safely provide services to our community. Further protecting our staff during this time of higher prevalence will help us mitigate the risk of infection and exposure to our staff. We know many in our community are not seeking care when needed. It is important for you to feel safe entering our facility and this will provide an additional level of safety.”

If you are experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19, please call your medical provider. Calling ahead of time allows healthcare workers to screen patients and lessen possible exposure within a facility. Please continue to follow CDC guidelines and wear a cloth mask in public, wash your hands frequently and practice social distancing. “It is important we continue to work together to slow the spread of this virus,” Saia said.

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