

Re-introduction of Nursing and Allied Health Learners

COVID-19 FAQs (Health Professions Schools)

Duke is working on a **slow and measured re-introduction of learners** to the clinical environment to allow us to know what needs to be different in order for our patients, staff, and learners to remain safe. As we adjust to our “new” normal with the COVID-19 pandemic, we know there are many questions. The list below provides the responses to common questions. If you have additional questions, email clinicaleducation@duke.edu

When can I expect learners to return to my clinical area?

DUHS will be gradually returning learners for planned clinical experiences on June 1st.

What does a “slow and measured” re-introduction mean?

With safety being the priority for our patients, staff and learners, along with our desire to continue to educate others, we are gradually bringing learners back to the clinical settings. Having smaller groups of learners will allow us to learn and adjust to the new norm. Learners are being re-introduced to the clinical areas based on area’s capacity to have a learner or a learner group onsite and to meet the learner’s clinical requirements.

What restrictions will learners have while in the clinical setting?

Learners are restricted from participating in the care of COVID-19 patients and any patients on isolation, in order to conserve PPE.

Clinical rotations planned for what are now designated COVID-19 units are being reassigned.

There may be certain work areas or departments that are unable to accommodate learners at this time. In such cases, we will reassign the learner or clinical group to a different areas.

Will learners and/or faculty go through Duke Health’s screening?

Yes, all learners and faculty will be screened as employees prior to entry to a building and will receive one facemask for the shift along with the specific daily colored dot. Each person will be given a dot to indicate they are allowed on the campus for that date. The dot is to be displayed on the name badge. The dot colors change daily.

Learners, as well as staff, are encouraged to stay at home if they are sick even with mild symptoms.

Will learners be provided PPE?

Yes, learners and faculty will receive one facemask for the shift.

What is the masking at work policy for Duke University Health System?



Patients, visitors, team members, learners and faculty are required to wear a mask at all times while onsite at our clinics and hospitals

- *Only Duke-issued masks are allowed. Homemade masks are not permitted.*
- *Team members should also wear their mask while entering and exiting the facility, walking to and from their cars and waiting for and riding the bus.*
- *Read the Duke Health [Masking Protocol for Team Members](#) for more information on our masking protocols.*

What are the recommendations for social distancing in the clinical environment?

- *Learners should not gather in groups. This includes meals and post-conferences. **Post-conferences need to be conducted off-site or virtually.***
- *All learners and faculty will be expected to minimize the spread of infection by following the DUHS guidelines for common areas such as shared spaces, eating in break rooms and similar situations.*
- *Wear your mask at all times when not actively eating or drinking.*
- *Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others when possible.*
- *Clean your hands with soap and water before and after eating.*
- *Follow safe food handling practices.*
- *Limit the number of people at a table to maintain 6 feet of physical distance.*
- *Leave the break room or common area when you have finished eating.*
- *Limit the time spent unmasked while eating or drinking to 10 minutes.*
- *Clean shared surfaces and equipment frequently throughout the day.*

What are other strategies for schools to consider for promoting social distancing on the unit?

Encourage strategies to promote social distancing of 6 feet apart, when possible, in the clinical area. Strategies for social distancing in the clinical area may include:

- *Decrease total clinical days by increasing the shift length to 12 hours*
- *Decrease clinical group size. (An option to help with this is to have two learners participate in simulation assignments each week instead of being on the clinical floor.)*
- *Consider spacing out the patient assignments to different halls or areas of the unit.*
- *Have learners use hallway or patient room computers to allow nurses to work at the nurse's station.*
- *Be mindful of congregating in the unit breakroom or conference rooms.*
- *Clinical Instructors may talk with the unit leadership to discuss other measures being taken to maintain social distancing.*

What if I don't feel comfortable coming on site to DUHS?

Schools should never feel pressured to send learners if they do not feel comfortable during this time. Faculty can determine other arrangements.

Who should learners contact if there is a suspected exposure?

Accidental exposures should be reported through the Employee Health Blood and Body Fluid Hotline at 919-684-8115

What are new responsibilities of Clinical Instructors during this re-introduction to the clinical area?

- *Have a plan for social distancing in the clinical setting.*
- *Limit the learner activities to their assigned patient, only.*
- *Keep their learner assignment sheets for a minimum of three weeks. Sheets will also need to be uploaded to Rotation Manager as an attachment.*

[Student Assignment Template](#)

Who do I contact if learners need onboarding instructions?

Please contact the DUHS Clinical Nurse Educator for Clinical Affiliations, Melinda Loeffler, for information and instructions on learner onboarding. clinicaleducation@dm.duke.edu or melinda.l.miller@duke.edu

What should I do if my life support card has expired or will be expiring very soon?

Based on recommendations from AHA, Duke Health leadership has extended the expiration of life support certification. Learners and faculty have at least until the end of the calendar year to recertify.

I may not be interested in taking a traditional class. Are there options?

Heartcode remains a popular option. You would register and do the class online at your timing, and see a CNE to have your skills checked off.

What are some of the patient education resources about COVID-19?

You may find the following Duke Health COVID-19 patient education materials resourceful

- [*Known COVID-19 Infection: Guidelines for You and Others in Your Home After Hospital Discharge \(English and Spanish\)*](#)
- [*COVID-19 Infection with Mild or No Symptoms: Guidelines for You and Others in Your Home \(English and Spanish\)*](#)
- [*Tips to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 \(English and Spanish and Arabic\)*](#)

In addition, there are numerous COVID-19 resources available on the public [Healthwise Coronavirus Resource Center](#).

Where can I find other Duke COVID-19 resources?

Refer to the DUHS Covid-19 Management site at [Duke Coronavirus Response](#)

For any other questions, refer to the [DUHS Clinical Instructors resources](#) or contact Melinda Loeffler, MSN, RN, Clinical Affiliations Clinical Nurse Educator at melinda.l.miller@duke.edu; or contact Margaret H. Sturdivant, MSN, RN, CPPS, Administrative Director for Patient Education and Clinical Affiliations at margaret.sturdivant@duke.edu