

Masking expectations: Adult Oncology

TYPE OF INFORMATION: Informational

INTENDED AUDIENCE: All Midwest Region sites

Situation S	Advocate Health Midwest recently eliminated the requirement for universal masking in its facilities. Masking is still encouraged in the care of certain patient types, including those with cancer and other immunocompromised conditions.
Background B	Due to a variety of factors, including strong population immunity, low levels of COVID in our communities and hospitals, much less severe disease caused by COVID and readily available treatments, universal masking is no longer required in our facilities. Oncology patients are among those at higher risk for acquiring symptomatic COVID and progressing to more severe disease, though the outlook for these patients with COVID is considerably better than it was during the height of the pandemic.
Assessment A	Masking is encouraged but not required in the care of most oncology patients.
Recommendation R	- Masking is required by teammates and visitors who have face-to-face contact with adult patients in dedicated areas in which oncology services are provided (e.g., inpatient oncology units, radiation therapy centers, oncology infusion clinics), who are being treated for: - Bone marrow transplant - Stem cell transplant - CAR T-Cell therapy - Acute leukemia - Masking by teammates and visitors is encouraged for face-to-face contact with all other patients in those dedicated areas. Clinical care team members should mask when requested by patients. - Masking by clinical care team members for patients with symptomatic disease due to COVID or other respiratory infections should be guided by transmission-based precautions and PPE Grid.
Questions? Please contact:	

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Originating Department: Infection Prevention & Midwest Region Senior Ops Leadership