RE: Policy & Froedtert South Questions from FOX6

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To: Amanda St. Hilaire <Amanda.St.Hilaire@fox6now.com>
Cc: Wienke, Nalissa <nalissa.wienke@froedtert.com>

Amanda –

I cannot speak to Froedtert “South” (Froedtert Kenosha Hospital/Froedtert Pleasant Prairie Hospital) as their HR policies may differ than our Froedtert Health policies. Please reach out to Tom Duncan with “Froedtert South” specific questions - Tom.Duncan@froedtertsouth.com.

I can speak to Froedtert Health HR policies that are applicable to Froedtert Hospital, Froedtert West Bend Hospital, Froedtert Menomonee Falls Hospital and all of our clinics and health centers. In the interest of the safety of health care providers, patients and our community Froedtert Health has implemented a number of efforts to support our staff. While many organizations nationwide are advising staff to stay home and practice social distancing, our mission will require us to ask the vast majority of our staff to be in person and literally hands on.

In addition to consistently reinforcing best practices in personal protection, we are working hard to help our staff manage an increase in family obligations - especially with the school closures - and concerns about their personal health and that of their loved ones. Here is a high level recap of efforts related to our staff by Froedtert Health.

- We have developed COVID-19 specific policies covering attendance, illness, quarantine and more. The overarching goal is to have our healthy staff members present to meet patient needs.
- We are identifying contingency plans for staffing, including redeploying staff from non-clinical to clinical settings and leveraging clinical staff to support virtual care.
- We are developing and testing our capabilities to expand the number of staff working at home, including a prioritization of staff based on their personal health risk categories (e.g. immune compromised staff) and areas where the presence onsite is least critical and/or creates a higher risk of exposure.
- In addition to promoting the child care service provider included in our benefit plan, we have created a platform for staff to connect with each other to meet unexpected child care needs. This practice creates a space where staff who have children in need of care can connect with staff who know available caregivers.
- We have again increased the availability and visibility of our Employee Assistance program to address the emotional and mental health needs of our staff.
- As part of our commitment to our employees and their families’ whole health, we’re working with SilverCloud, a clinically proven online platform, to offer free self-directed access to programs and resources that build resilience, and help provide skills to manage stress and sleep issues. Based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness and positive psychology, these action-oriented programs build self-awareness and self-management skills for emotional health.

As a reminder for the safety of our health care providers and patients, we ask that patients who believe they may have COVID-19 to call their health care provider or utilize a virtual care option. We have established a triage system for patients with symptoms to determine if they meet the requirements for COVID-19 testing.

Best –
Steve

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Subject: Re: Questions from FOX6

Thanks - our story runs tonight. We've talked to employees (specifically from Froedtert South) who say they're concerned the policy will discourage people from staying home when they're sick.

I've also heard concerns from Froedtert South that nurses who are being told to stay home because their departments aren't busy right now (with the canceling of elective surgeries) aren't being paid for that time and aren't being permitted to train to help out in other areas that might need additional staff. That's not part of today's story, but it is a claim I'm looking into, so any response you could provide would be appreciated.
I’m doing a story about the leave policies of southeast Wisconsin health systems during the pandemic. Attached is a memo about Froedtert's policies. I have a few questions:

- Is this policy current, or is it outdated? If there is a newer policy, can you please provide it?

- Are there plans to update the policy soon? If so, when?

- I know the sheet says it applies to the policy after the "grace period" ends; what were Froedtert's policies about COVID-19 leave before the grace period? What happened if a worker was exposed to a confirmed or possible COVID-19 case?

- I know the policy says high risk/immunocompromised workers need to use PTO or unpaid time off; is there concern that that will discourage those workers from protecting themselves against COVID-19? Is the leave of absence mentioned in the policy with or without pay?
- The memo says staff who test positive will receive full pay. What about staff who test negative?

- The memo says staff who are quarantined will receive full pay. Who decides if the staff member is quarantined, and when does that happen?

- If staff members are exposed to a person under investigation for COVID-19, do they continue to work until it's been confirmed that the person under investigation tested positive?

- Many nurses we've talked to are working moms; is there concern they'll need to go extended periods of time without pay, since leave due to child care issues is not compensated once PTO runs out?

Is anyone available to do a Skype or phone interview about this issue? My deadline is 6pm tonight.

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