

## VUMC Guidelines on Advanced Infection Prevention Interventions for Respiratory Virus Surges

**Background:** As community rates of respiratory viral infections (such as influenza, RSV, and COVID) increase, VUMC may need to augment baseline infection prevention practices to reduce the risk of virus spread to our patients and personnel. The following guideline notes the tiered responses to be taken as respiratory virus activity increases in our region.

**Metrics that will inform the need to advance tiers and implement added protections:**

METRIC	DEFINED AS	SOURCE
Local Respiratory Virus Activity Level	Weekly activity levels based on the percentage of visits to outpatient healthcare providers or emergency departments for fever + cough or sore throat. Visits can be attributed to a variety of respiratory pathogens that cause these symptoms, including influenza, RSV, and SARS-CoV-2.	<a href="#">TN DOH</a> <a href="#">CDC</a>
VUMC Test Positivity Rate for Flu/RSV/COVID	Percent of specimens tested for influenza, RSV, and SARS-CoV-2 that are positive for 1 or more of these viruses.	Internal VUMC

### Infection Prevention Tiers for Respiratory Virus Activity:

TIER	TIER DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS	METRIC THRESHOLDS THAT TRIGGER TIER*	
			Resp Virus Level <sup>§</sup>	+ Rate
0	<b>Universal Infection Prevention Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic infection prevention practices (hand hygiene, isolation precautions, environmental cleaning, standard ventilation)</li> <li>VUMC personnel and patient immunization programs</li> <li>VUMC personnel not working when ill</li> <li>Signage advising VUMC visitors to not visit if ill</li> </ul>	Minimal	
1	<b>Enhanced Awareness and Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tier 0 Actions <b>PLUS</b></li> <li>Enhanced messaging on strategies to prevent infection (possibly including voluntary masking)</li> <li>Messaging around respecting those who may choose to mask in VUMC facilities (VUMC personnel, patients, visitors)</li> </ul>	Moderate	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">OR</div> ≥10%
2	<b>Advanced Interventions in High-Risk Locations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tier 1 Actions <b>PLUS</b></li> <li>Masking of all VUMC personnel, patients, and visitors in VUMC High-Risk Units<sup>†</sup></li> </ul>	High	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">&amp;</div> ≥10%
3	<b>Advanced Interventions Across All Clinical Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tier 2 Actions <b>PLUS</b></li> <li>Universal masking of all VUMC personnel upon entry into any and <u>all</u> VUMC clinical areas</li> <li>Active screening of VUMC visitors for signs/symptoms of infection</li> </ul>	Very High	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">&amp;</div> ≥15%

\* Tier advances if *noted* metrics hit threshold on 2 consecutive weeks

<sup>§</sup> Davidson County will be used for assessing respiratory virus level

<sup>†</sup> **High-Risk Patient Units** (units with a high proportion of patients at high-risk for virus-related complications and lower vaccine response): VUH: 11 North, 10 CCT, 7 MCE; MCJCHV: 6A and 6B; Adult Ambulatory: Outpatient Transplant Unit (OTU); Pediatric Ambulatory: DOT6 Heme-Onc Clinic

**NOTES:**

- *With the exception of high-risk units in Tiers 2 and 3, patients and visitors will be strongly encouraged but will not be required to mask in VUMC settings.*
- *In the event of a localized healthcare-associated outbreak of a respiratory pathogen (e.g., increased cluster of patient and employee influenza infections in a unit with concern for healthcare-associated transmission), advanced interventions such as universal masking may be implemented for the outbreak location, regardless of the Tier status of VUMC.*
- *Due to impacts on the safe and effective delivery of care across VUMC, surges in personnel absences (as tracked by the VUMC Occupational Health Clinic) can also elevate the Tier of specific impacted areas or all of VUMC, depending on severity.*
- *Tiers may be escalated sooner in the setting of new emerging strains with high morbidity or mortality, as determined by VUMC leadership*