

## Hospice of Laurens County (HOLC) COVID-19 FAQs for Referral Sources

**1. Is HOLC accepting hospice referrals of COVID positive patients or Persons Under Investigation (PUI)?**

Every hospice referral must first meet eligibility guidelines. Each referral is unique and if infectious diseases are part of the patient's active diagnoses, supply of PPE must be considered.

As of today (4.9.20), HOLC could accept COVID positive patients or PUI, at home or in nursing facilities. The patient's needs and functional status would determine the extent of PPE needed for family and hospice staff. Therefore, each case would be assessed individually. We may request the referral source to partner with us in provision of some PPE, depending on duration of need and amount needed.

**2. Can referrals be made to HOLC inpatient units (IPU)?**

CDC guidance is to physically separate COVID positive patients or PUI from other patients in a facility. HOLC IPUs are not prepared as of today (4.9.20) to accept COVID positive or PUIs. However, we are working to prepare our physical IPU space for this. We do know that IPU referrals would be directed to our freestanding IPU buildings – LDHH Huntersville and the Hospice of Laurens County (SC) IPU. LDHH-Aldersgate would continue to admit non-COVID positive or PUI referrals. We will update this page once final plans are made for IPU preparedness.

**3. For hospice referrals that have been hospitalized for non-COVID reasons, do they need to be tested because of potential exposure?**

No, testing is not required prior to hospice referral unless the patient is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. HOLC will follow proper PPE guidelines based on clinical presentation and risk assessment.

**4. What is the HOLC IPU visitation policy – would family be able to be with a dying patient there?**

Visitation at HOLC IPUs is restricted and exceptions are only for imminently dying patients. The IPU clinical staff will determine visitation allowances. We will do our best to balance dignity and respect for the patient with risk minimization for staff and others in our IPU.

**5. Is HOLC able to test patients for COVID-19?**

Not at this time.

**6. Are HOLC staff making visits?**

Yes, however, in-person visits are minimized based on clinical necessity to protect HOLC staff and our patients/families. COVID risk and screening occur prior to every in-person visit to assure proper PPE utilization. HOLC is also respecting individual nursing home and facility guidance on who is allowed into their buildings.

**7. Are HOLC staff self-screening for risk of coronavirus infection?**

Yes, daily. All staff are trained to report any new symptom to the HOLC Employee Health Nurse.

**8. Is HOLC utilizing telehealth?**

Yes, HOLC is using telehealth by nursing, social work, chaplains, grief counselors and practitioners. However, in-person visits are still necessary and are dictated by the clinical needs of each patient. HOLC is committed to continuing to provide the highest clinical care for every patient regardless of COVID status.