



## **ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH**

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release

#### **STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 CASE AT WHIDBEY HEALTH (CORONAVIRUS)**

**Island County, September 27, 2020:**

**Contact: Nic Wildeman at [wilden@whidbeyhealth.org](mailto:wilden@whidbeyhealth.org)**

Island County Public Health recently received notification that a member of the Surgical Services team at WhidbeyHealth tested positive for COVID-19. Following investigation, WhidbeyHealth has determined that the virus was contracted outside of work. The team member rapidly reported symptoms, which developed while at work, and immediately returned home to self-quarantine and follow current guidance. Exposure of patients and staff was limited to people who were in the operating room between September 22-24.

#### **WhidbeyHealth has taken the following steps:**

- Affected individuals have been identified and contacted. Patients have been provided advice regarding available testing services, should they choose to seek testing. Exposed staff have been swabbed and are following current guidance.
- WhidbeyHealth is directly coordinating with Island County Public Health to assist with contact tracing and to help contain the spread of the virus.
- Elective surgeries and non-urgent visits to the surgery, obstetrics and orthopedic clinics are postponed until October 7, allowing exposed staff to safely and responsibly complete their period of quarantine.
- Urgent and emergency surgeries and care for moms in labor will continue as normal.
- Effective Monday, September 28, visitors will be limited to one support person per patient throughout the Medical Center and all clinics.
- Effective Monday, September 28, the West Wind Café and Gift Shop will be closed to the public.

#### **WhidbeyHealth infection control procedures include:**

- Universal masking of patients, staff, and support persons, including patients when a provider enters the room
- Extensive use of PPE as required for each patient interaction

- Frequent handwashing and sanitizing
- Fever and recent history screening at all entrances to all facilities, including all staff who are screened daily
- Modification of facilities to ensure physical distancing

It is important to remember that healthcare workers are our neighbors, friends, and family members. All members of our community are at risk of exposure while carefully participating in daily activities such as grocery shopping, going to work, and engaging in limited social gatherings. It is paramount that all individuals continue to follow current guidance and take action to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread.

**Beating this pandemic requires participation from everyone.** Please do your part by:

- Wearing cloth face coverings to protect others
- Washing and sanitizing your hands frequently
- Limiting travel outside of Island County
- Reducing social gatherings to a weekly number fewer than 10 people outside of your direct household

**For additional information:**

- Island County Public Health - [www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/Pages/COVID-19.aspx](http://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/Pages/COVID-19.aspx)
- Island County Public Health Call Center: # 360.678.2301, Mondays through Fridays, 8:00am – 4:30pm
- WhidbeyHealth: Information at facebook.com/whidbeyhealth or [whidbeyhealth.org](http://whidbeyhealth.org)
- Washington State Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19>