

Midland Policy for Emergent Infectious Diseases

PURPOSE:

To provide guidance on how to prepare for a new or newly evolved infectious disease whose incidence has increased or is threatening to increase, which could pose a significant public health threat. This includes the potential for infection to our staff and all individuals who are served by Midland.

ASSUMPTION:

This document is intended to address policy elements that are broad and can be customizable to similar threats. It is not comprehensive. Every outbreak of disease is unique. The local, state and Federal health authorities are the source of information in times of public health crises. Those institutions are to be relied upon for the most up to date guidance on prevention, surveillance and treatment related to a specific outbreak.

GOAL:

To protect everyone in the Midland community:

MIDLAND SCHOOL—students, employees, and families

MIDLAND RESIDENTIAL—residents, employees and families

MIDLAND EMPLOYMENT—adult participants, employees and families

MIDLAND EXPLORES DAY HABILITATION—adult participants, employees and families

1. General Preparedness

- a. Midland will develop a response plan in the event of a community wide infectious disease outbreak. The plan will include:
 - i. Expansion of current workplace practices of infection prevention, including disinfection protocols
 - ii. Include administrative controls (relevant policies for screening, isolation, visitation, financial operations)
 1. Human Resource issues should be included here (employee sick benefits, leave policies)
 - iii. Address environmental controls (sanitation stations, use of personal protective equipment, supplemental technology)
 - iv. Compatibility with business continuity plan, impact on financial operations
- b. Midland's nursing and administrative staff will be vigilant and stay informed about the risks of infectious diseases globally; while assessing localized impact.
- c. Midland will maintain and inventory its stock of personal protective equipment (PPE) which includes, but is not limited to: moisture barrier gowns, face shields, surgical masks, gloves, hand sanitizers and disinfectants.
- d. Midland will develop plans with vendors for re-supply of medications, sanitizing agents, and PPE in the event of disruption of supply chains; as a result of an outbreak.
- e. Midland will regularly train employees and practice our plan through drills and exercises as part of preparedness training.
- f. Midland will continuously update its electronic record systems and Honeywell alert systems to assure for reliable communication sources to its larger community.

2. Local Threat

- a. Midland will activate specific prevention, monitoring and screening as instructed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) and/or other local public health authorities. This will include a comprehensive understanding of the specific signs, symptoms, incubation period, route of infection, risk of exposure and/or any other relevant information regarding the specific outbreak.
- b. This information will be disseminated to all Director level positions (including Principal of The Midland School). Human Resources and Operations may need to revise policies and procedures in response to the specific outbreak.

- c. Staff will be educated on exposure risks, symptoms and prevention by Midland's Learning and Development Specialist. Special emphasis on basic infection prevention, use of PPE and reporting requirements will be provided. Similar instruction will be provided to the students and adults served by Midland.
- d. Communications will be disseminated to the families of everyone served by Midland that explain the specific signs, symptoms, incubation period, route of infection, risk of exposure and/or any other relevant information regarding the specific outbreak. These communications will include Midland's response plan, at a level that is appropriate to their interests and need for information.
- e. The Midland Board of Trustees, all consultants, contractors and other relevant Midland stakeholders will be briefed on our response policies and procedures.
- f. Signs regarding hand sanitation, respiratory etiquette and/or other prevention strategies will be posted in conspicuous areas throughout Midland, along with the instruction at all building entries that any person who may be sick is denied entry to the building or will be screened outside of the building by a nurse.
- g. To ensure a low risk to our community, screening may also be done prior to any new admissions into any Midland program and any new Midland employee.
- h. Self-screening tools may also be used. Staff will be educated on how to properly complete as well as:
 - i. Reporting requirements if suspected exposure has occurred,
 - ii. Precautionary removal of employee who report exposure or suspected exposure,
 - iii. Self-screening prior to each shift,
 - iv. Prohibiting staff from working if they are not feeling well. This restriction will remain in effect until the person is cleared by appropriate medical authorities, and in compliance with appropriate labor laws.
- i. Agency isolation: in the event that the infectious disease is present in the local community, Midland may consider closing to new admissions and limiting visitation to programs, based on the advice of medical professionals, including the CDC and NJ DOH.
- j. Environmental matters—Midland will follow CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting specific to the infectious disease at hand. This will be in addition to routine cleaning for the duration of the event.
- k. Additional environmental controls such as partitioning of rooms, barriers, creation of sanitation stations, proper handling of waste materials may also be developed according to CDC guidelines.

3. Suspected case

- a. In the event that a staff or person served exhibits symptoms of the infectious disease, they will immediately be placed in isolation while the local authorities are notified. Some person's served may require the presence of a staff person to

supervise them while in isolation. The staff person should be a nurse who is completely donned in PPE. If the nurse is not available, another staff will supervise, again, with the security of full PPE measures.

- b. Midland will arrange for the transfer of the suspected infectious person to the appropriate hospital via emergency services as soon as possible, based on guidance received by the local health authorities.
- c. The number of staff assigned to the room of the suspected infectious person should be kept to a minimum.
- d. If feasible, encourage the isolated person to wear a facemask and gloves while in the isolation room. Continue to provide care to the person at the level necessary to address their essential needs.
- e. Conduct other control activities such as proper waste management of any infectious waste, disinfecting the isolation room once empty and monitoring for additional cases under the guidance of the local health authorities.
- f. Activate quarantine interventions for all persons served and staff with suspected exposure as instructed by local health authorities and the CDC.
- g. Patient confidentiality, as per HIPAA guidelines, will be followed for all cases.

4. Employer considerations

- a. Protection of everyone in our community is of paramount concern. Midland will consider requirements under Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS), all applicable New Jersey State Departments, Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other state and federal laws in determining the precautions to protect health and safety. Other considerations include:
 - i. The likelihood of the infectious disease transmittal;
 - ii. The method by which the disease spreads (ex. respiratory, contaminated surfaces)
 - iii. The precautions which can mitigate the spread of the infectious disease
 - iv. Other factors relevant to that particular outbreak
- b. Once all of these factors are considered, Midland will apply actions to maintain safety. Any action for employees will be uniform based on like circumstances.
- c. Midland will not consider race, gender, marital status, sexuality or any other protected class characteristics as determined by law in decision making; unless there is documented and validated medical evidence relevant to the spread of the disease.
- d. Reasonable accommodations will be considered, based on job requirements and at the discretion of Midland.
- e. Midland will permit employees to use Paid Time Off (Sick/Personal Days, FMLA(Federal Medical Leave Act)/NJFLA (New Jersey Family Leave Act) or

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Vacation Days) where appropriate, if they are out of work or out to care for a family member due to the infectious disease.

- f. Employees will be permitted to return to work when cleared by a licensed physician. Additional precautions may be required by Midland upon return to work to assure for protection from transmission.
- g. Employees who refuse to take the precautions set out by Midland may be subject to further disciplinary action(s) up to and including termination of employment.