



***AAAASF has directed Accredited Medical Facilities
To Employ Additional Precautions Due to the outbreak of COVID-19***

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 23 March 2020: As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread globally, the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (AAAASF), as part of its primary mission of ensuring patient safety, is directing healthcare facilities to employ measures to ensure the utmost safety of the patients, staff and the community at large.

The critical role of AAAASF is to verify that patients are appropriately screened for risks, and the facility can respond to an emergency. In addition, infection control remains a critical criteria for accreditation that helps protect the entire community from the transmission of this widespread virus.

As per AAAASF's directives, the current situation requires facilities to enhance routine infection control procedures with measures approved by authorities such as World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States.

As part of its contingency plans, AAAASF has announced a new list of criteria that all medical facilities must put in place.

1. The facility must have an infection control policy and emergency plan including, among other hazards, COVID-19
2. The facility must screen for symptoms like cough, fever, runny nose, or throat pain before and upon arrival and develop isolation procedures; patients over 50, with symptoms or

co-morbidities, should have elective cases postponed or be provided with protective measures for non-elective cases

3. The facility must emphasize environmental cleaning for public areas and surfaces to be under constant cleaning with alcohol; exam rooms to be cleaned after each patient; and removal of high touch items, such as reading material
4. All facilities must encourage staff to report symptoms and be allowed sick leave if staff or a household member becomes a known or suspected COVID-19 case
5. The facilities must post precautionary messages and signs about COVID 19: "Stop The Spread"; cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene
6. All facilities must have an adequate supply of paper tissue, hand sanitizer, and personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves, and eyewear for staff and patients.
7. The facilities must have a plan for an orderly shut-down, with contingencies to check sensitive systems such as sterile storage and refrigerated medications.

AAAASF has asked all accredited facilities to update their hazard risk assessments and emergency preparedness, to include a pandemic response. Every healthcare facility, no matter their location or specialty, are part of the community infrastructure and should consider their roles in assisting hospitals responding to the outbreak.

The AAAASF accredits thousands of facilities worldwide, making it one of the largest not-for-profit outpatient accrediting organizations. The organization is acknowledged and recognized within the healthcare industry for setting the Gold standard in accreditation.

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About AAAASF:

AAAASF strives for the highest standards of excellence for its facilities by regularly updating its requirements for patient safety and quality of care, while requiring facilities to continually self-assess and evolve. Facility quality improvement plans must include identifying and correcting deficiencies cited during the facility's annual inspection. This shows that the facility is taking their feedback into account.

AAAASF also requires facilities to collect and report on patient safety data from a number of cases each quarter, and mandates facility meetings to peer review cases throughout the year.

Through these measures, AAAASF aims to improve the performance and quality of the facilities it accredits, while also ensuring the standards are maintained.

AAAASF was established in 1980 to standardize and improve the quality of health care in outpatient facilities. AAAASF accredits thousands of facilities world-wide. Physicians, clinicians, legislators, state/federal health agencies, and patients acknowledge that AAAASF sets the 'Gold Standard in Accreditation'.