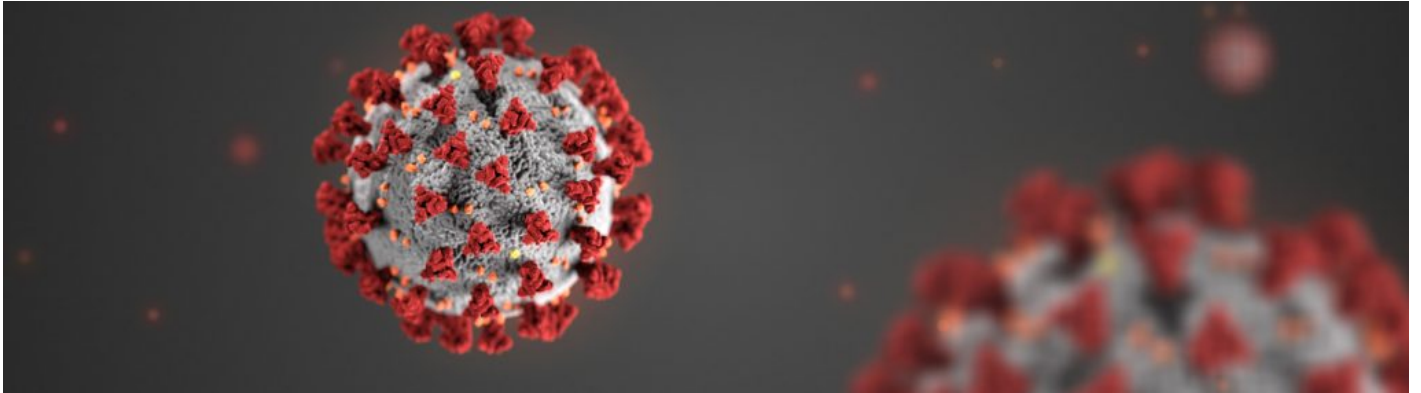


How is MAHEC Responding to COVID-19?



Our clinical and administrative staff and leadership have responded with incredible speed, expertise, and dedication to this rapidly evolving public health crisis. There is so much good work being done across MAHEC every day that it can be hard to keep up with it all. We know this list will continue to grow as our community's needs change.

Please email us at webmaster@mahec.net with anything that should be added to this list!

Patient Care

- Screening patients prior to entrance to our Family Health Centers and Ob/Gyn Specialists
- Enhancing cleaning protocols to include hourly cleaning of all high-touch surfaces in common areas and cleaning patient rooms thoroughly after each visit
- Modifying patient flow to support social distancing and prevent congregating in waiting rooms, labs, and common areas
- Establishing an onsite drive-up clinic to evaluate respiratory symptoms and test for COVID-19
- Procuring additional PPE and COVID-19 testing supplies
- Educating clinical staff on best practices for using personal protective equipment
- Requiring the use of face masks for all staff working in patient care areas
- Screening healthcare providers daily for symptoms before they arrive at work
- Transitioning to telephone and virtual (online) care - including same-day sick visits - for family medicine, ob/gyn, and psychiatry patients, where practical
- Limiting dental services to urgent care with support provided to Emergency Departments
- Partnering with Mission Hospital to procure iPads so MAHEC's community-based doulas can support mothers during labor while hospital visitor restrictions are in place
- Updating MAHEC's website and social media with the latest COVID-19 guidance

Regional & Statewide Support

- Collaborating with the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, regional, and state partners

to assess the COVID-19 readiness of more than 200 primary care practices across WNC

- Surveying dental practices across the region to ensure patients with urgent dental needs have access to care
- Supporting WNC healthcare providers with COVID-19-related needs including transitioning to telehealth, billing, and accessing financial assistance
- Providing free daily drop-in support for telehealth implementation and COVID-19 response using our Project ECHO videoconference platform
- Assisting with COVID-19 testing in rural areas including the Qualla Boundary of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Distributing blood pressure cuffs and patient education to ensure postpartum patients with a history of pre-eclampsia can conduct home monitoring for follow-up care with their OB provider after hospital discharge
- Offering an accelerated RN Refresher course in collaboration with UNC-Chapel Hill to help nurses with inactive licences get the clinical training they need to quickly re-enter the healthcare workforce
- Developing and disseminating reproductive life-planning guidance in collaboration with the Preconception Health & Health Care Initiative and UNC-Chapel Hill
- Moving all continuing professional development programs to online/virtual options
- Supporting medical students in collaborating with UNC Asheville to manufacture N-95 masks and face shields using the university's 3-D printers
- Assisting with the deployment of skilled volunteers and resources across the region

Administrative & Employee Support

- Meeting daily with our COVID-19 taskforce
- Communicating COVID-19 information to leaders then to staff via email
- Posting COVID-19 updates, resources, and tools on our intranet
- Establishing dedicated 24/7 phone number for COVID-19 questions and concerns
- Emailing health updates to employees from our infection prevention team
- Establishing travel restrictions and surveillance protocols to minimize staff and patient risk of exposure
- Providing teleconference and WebEx options for all internal and external meetings
- Asking employees to monitor temperature before coming to work on campus and to practice social distancing and regularly clean high-touch work surfaces (including keyboards and cell phones)
- Encouraging telecommuting for employees whose roles, duties, and experience can support this option