



Pia Bhatia <pb919@georgetown.edu>

COVID-19 Public Health Alert: Case Being Treated at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

1 message

Dr. Vince WinklerPrins, Chief Public Health Officer <announcements@georgetown.edu> Sun, Mar 8, 2020 at 4:30 PM
Reply-To: announcements@georgetown.edu
To: pb919@georgetown.edu

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Dear Members of the Georgetown Community,

As you may know, DC Health has announced the District's first presumptive positive case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that our clinical partner, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital (MGUH), is caring for a patient who has been diagnosed through laboratory and clinical assessment for the COVID-19 virus. The care is being directed by a specialized team of clinicians trained to treat patients with a variety of communicable diseases.

DC Health is coordinating closely with MGUH, where the patient is currently being treated and all infection control protocols are fully implemented. This includes measures that ensure patient isolation, the use of protective equipment and the deployment of infection control and sterilization measures.

While no one in the Georgetown community has tested positive for COVID-19, MGUH is working closely with the CDC and DC Health and following all CDC protocols for patients and any staff and medical students who may have been impacted. Their health and safety is our top priority.

Since January, Georgetown University has convened regular leadership meetings on this issue, activated an Emergency Response Team and has coordinated closely with DC Health, colleagues at MGUH and higher education partners. We have sent regular updates to the community, all of which are posted on an informational [website](#) along with other resources for our community.

We will continue to provide regular updates as we take additional measures to ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. Earlier this week, all of our faculty members and academic staff were given resources on how to prepare for [instructional continuity](#) in the event we need to move to an online teaching environment.

We recognize this announcement may cause great concern and anxiety for members of our community. We encourage anyone who might need support to reach out to university resources, including the [Office of Campus Ministry](#), [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) and [Faculty and Staff Assistance Program \(FSAP\)](#).

As we have shared previously, the [CDC](#) and [DC Health](#) recommend the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to:

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds multiple times a day. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used if soap and water are not available;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Stay home when feeling sick;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

We will continue to evaluate the situation on a daily basis and update you as needed. Please be aware that we are working in a rapidly changing environment, and we may need to amend our policies on short notice.

You can find all university updates, [answers to frequently asked questions](#) and other resources related to coronavirus on the [Georgetown University website](#).

Sincerely,

Vince WinklerPrins, MD, FAAFP

Chief Public Health Officer