



Innovative Staffing Models to Support COVID Recovery

Implementing innovative staffing models will be key for your practice's COVID-19 recovery plan. Innovative staffing models help to ensure the safety of your office staff, offer flexible options for your staff in the time of a pandemic, help to identify core functions that can be done in the office versus remotely, and help you to prepare in the event of staff shortages due to staff or family member illness. Innovative staffing models include implementing schedules to minimize the number of people physically in the practice at a given time by staggering hours and staff and combining telemedicine with in-person visits. The following menu of recommendations and resources are available to help you get started with creating a new staffing model for your practice:

- Consider your staffing needs for multiple scenarios including:
 - Re-opening:
 - Phasing in of services offered
 - Limited in-person visits and number of staff/patients in office
 - Supplemented by telemedicine
 - Extended office hours
 - Surge:
 - Prepare for potential surges of patients with COVID and/or influenza
 - Significantly limit in-person visits and number of staff/patients in office
 - Increased care delivery by telemedicine
 - Long-term needs:
 - More full-service offerings
 - Return to normal operating hours
- Establish mini-teams within your practice. A mini-team is comprised of the essential staff required to keep your office functioning.
 - Determine essential functions and establish roles and responsibilities for each member of the mini-team.
 - Identify members of your staff with core skills, roles, and responsibilities and assign them to a mini-team.
 - Ensure each mini-team has the appropriate mix of clinical and office administration skills.
 - Supplement in-person responsibilities with remote work. Consider assigning remote work responsibilities to staff members at increased risk from COVID infection (hypertension, heart disease, obesity, chronic lung disease, age>60).
- Develop a strategy to address potential staff shortages (due to illness, sick family members, school/childcare closings, quarantine)
 - Cross-train staff on essential functions
 - Establish a back-up staffing contingency plan
 - Hold daily huddles with staff to see how they are doing and identify what support they might need. If possible, include remote staff in your daily huddles.
 - Resource: [JAMA article on addressing staff anxiety in the time of COVID](#)
- Develop a schedule to minimize the number of people who are physically present in the office
 - Assign each mini-team to alternating days or staggered hours

