COVID-19 Brief Conversation Guide

Examples of empathic responses and questions around sensitive subjects for patient and caregivers.

CAREGIVERS

Addressing Emotion
• This is such a tough situation.
• Your concerns are completely valid.
• Help me understand how you’re feeling right now?
• You’re not alone. I think a lot of people are scared.
• I wish we had better alternatives.
• You’re taking every precaution you possibly can to [be safe/help others].
• I’d feel [emotion – e.g., frustrated, exhausted, worried] too.

Fear of Exposure
• It’s hard to work without the worry of getting exposed to COVID-19.
• It can be helpful to talk about our worries with others. There are no simple answers, but our worries are easier to bare when we share them.

Addressing PPE Use
• I know you are worried about your safety and that of your family. I also know how committed you are to your patients.
• I wish we had an unending supply of PPE.
• What worries you most about the current PPE guidelines?

Continued on back
• How might we help you feel safer in your line of work?

Example: “It’s a scary time. I think most people are worried about COVID-19 exposure. I wish it wasn’t necessary to conserve PPE to ensure those working with patients who are COVID-19 + patients remain safe. Until we have a better sense of when this will end, I need to ask you to follow the current guidelines.

PATIENTS

Visitation Policy & COVID-19 Specific

• “We are working to provide the best care for you and recognize how difficult this must be for you.”

• “It must be difficult to be in the hospital and not allowed to have visitors.”

• “How have the visitor restrictions impacted you?”

• “Suspending visitation helps protect patients and caregivers because people with COVID-19 often don’t experience symptoms for several days.”

• “We encourage loved ones to connect virtually and can provide assistance with how to use Facetime, Google Hangout, Google Duo, or Skype.”

• “We have healing resources available to you and your family 24/7 through spiritual care by calling 1.844.204.7433.”

• “Although you can’t always see their faces, I want you to know you have the best team of people caring for you.”