



## **Our Response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak**

**We have heard so much in the news about a national outbreak of COVID-19 or coronavirus. A team of health system leaders and experts has developed a plan of response to what the World Health Organization has declared is a public emergency.**

**To begin, the safety and protection of patients, physicians and staff is our absolute priority. All guidelines and decision-making have and will continue to keep safety at the forefront. We have developed a comprehensive action plan to ensure that the health system is meeting current needs and preparing effectively in the event of a surge of patients.**

**The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued checklists for both a hospital and ambulatory setting in preparing for an outbreak of COVID-19. We are following CDC guidelines in preventing the spread of disease, promptly identifying and isolating patients, caring for patients with suspected cases of coronavirus, and monitoring the protection of healthcare staff.**

**Regular update meetings are used to oversee the implementation of our plan, assess changes and react accordingly.**



**Keep in mind that coronavirus is spread person-to-person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, through personal contact such as shaking hands, or by touching a contaminated surface or object and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands.**

**We are closely monitoring developments as this rapidly changing situation continues to unfold and will continue to take our lead from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health. I ask that you watch closely for further updates and stay mindful of your own health and safety.**

**Everyone can lower their risk with basic flu-prevention practices:**

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.**
- **Avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth if your hands have not been washed.**
- **Stay home if you're sick.**
- **Clean surfaces frequently.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.**
- **Wear a mask if you have respiratory symptoms.**