

# THE LINK

## ♦ Your APF Care Alliance ♦

Summer 2018

A partnership of patients, family members, and providers that promotes the voice of the patient, innovation, and optimization of the care experience for all.

### Flu shots required for all, at MGH

#### Exemption criteria include medical contraindications and religious beliefs

As you may know, Dr. Peter Slavin announced a new policy on July 31 stating that all MGH employees are required to receive flu shots this year. This is in line with health policies in many other hospitals in Boston and around the country.

In an effort to support MGH—and more importantly, to protect our staff members, patients, and family members—**APF staff will be unable to write letters for MGH/Partners employees requesting that they be made exempt from receiving the flu vaccine.**

We will make exceptions for patients who meet the criteria outlined in Dr. Slavin's letter (policy sections 1.2 and 1.3, below) and provide supporting documentation (in addition, per section 1.4, they must wear masks in patient care areas).

**1.2** *Employees who cannot receive the vaccination due to medical contraindications (i.e., a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome or anaphylaxis to the flu vaccine) must provide documentation from a qualified health care provider to Occupational Health Services to request an exemption or other potential accommodation.*

**1.3** *Employees who are unwilling to receive the vaccine due to deeply held religious beliefs must complete a Religious Exemption Form, which is subject to review by Human Resources in consultation with other departments, as necessary.*

**1.4** *Employees who are deemed exempt from receiving the vaccination due to medical contraindications or deeply held religious beliefs are required to wear an approved medical face mask in all patient care areas.*

Flu shots can save lives! Thank you for your understanding.

The APF Staff

### Practice notes

#### APF accepting new patients

Do you have an MGH colleague in need of a primary care provider?

Any MGH employee (and spouse or adult dependent) is eligible to be a patient at the APF, if they are enrolled in one of the Mass General/Partners-provided health insurance plans.

Please direct those interested to [www.massgeneral.org/apf](http://www.massgeneral.org/apf) where they will find links to "Become a New Patient" and "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)."

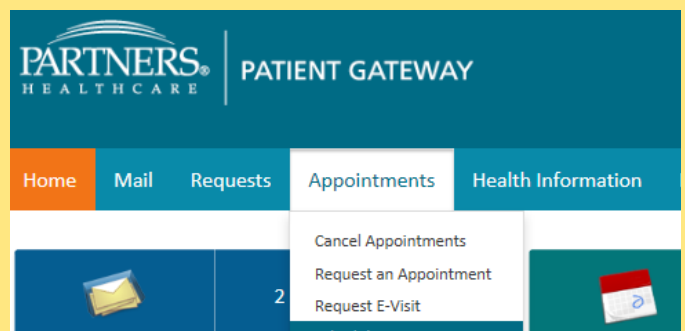
#### APF Care Alliance: Recruiting new members

The Care Alliance partners with staff to ensure that the practice continues to deliver excellent care and maintains the unique qualities of the APF patient experience. If you would like to join other patients interested in this mission, please email the CA at [www.apfcarealliance@partners.org](mailto:www.apfcarealliance@partners.org) or let your provider know.

#### Schedule your appointments on Patient Gateway!

- Log on to your Patient Gateway account
- Click on the "Appointments" tab
- Select "Request an Appointment"

From there you can select your PCP/provider and search by date and time until you find the one you want.



## Welcome Emily Finn, APF Practice Manager



Emily Finn,  
Practice Manager

Emily has been with Massachusetts General Hospital for five years, first with the Infectious Disease Division and then The Performance Analysis and Improvement Unit. Before joining the APF as the Practice Manager, Emily worked with the practice team as a Population Health Coordinator. In this role, she worked closely with the practice to ensure that patients were appropriately screened for colon, cervical, and breast cancer. Additionally, she helped manage chronic disease patients, ensuring they were getting timely labs and blood pressure checks. She so enjoyed the work she was doing with the APF that she decided to join the team fulltime—and she became the Practice Manager in March!

In her free time, Emily enjoys going to the ocean, being in the company of friends and family, pushing herself in indoor cycling classes, and exploring new restaurants and foods with her fiancée (congratulations to Emily on her upcoming wedding!).

## Seasonal flu: What to do if I get sick

### How do I know if I have the flu?

You may have the flu if you have some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore Throat
- Fatigue
- Nasal Congestion
- Diarrhea/Vomiting (only sometimes)
- Body Aches

### What should I do if I get sick?

If you have the flu, you should stay home, rest, and follow the advice below. Most people with the flu get better on their own, but some people have a more serious case. Signs that you need immediate medical attention include difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, and persistent vomiting.

### Take care of yourself and others if you are sick

- Drink clear fluids such as water, broth, sports drinks, or electrolyte beverages made for infants to prevent becoming dehydrated.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) for fever and aches.

- Avoid close contact with others, especially those who might easily get the flu, such as people age 65 years and older, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), pregnant women, young children, and infants.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after using tissues or coughing/sneezing into your hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.

### Do I need to be seen by a clinician if I am only a little sick?

No. Most people with the flu have mild illness and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs.

### How long should I stay home if I'm sick?

CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other things you have to do and no one else can do for you. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol.) You should stay home from work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

*This article is adapted from MGH/PCOI "Seasonal flu: What to do if I get sick," which can be found in the Resources section of Patient Gateway, under Partners Care Advice (PCOI), along with patient handouts about many other health and wellness topics.*



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### What is the Care Alliance PFAC?:

The Care Alliance (CA) is a Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), made up of volunteers who have a variety of experiences with Mass General. APF CA members include employees and their family members who are patients. We participate in monthly meetings and help shape APF programs and services.

**Your Care Alliance members:** Nancy Davis, Ann Erwin, Jarrett Maggio, Paul O'Leary, Julie Martin

**Contact us:** Please share your experiences/concerns and ideas for LINK articles at [apfcarealliance@partners.org](mailto:apfcarealliance@partners.org).

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