



# HIV Care During Social Distancing: The VUMC Experience

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# VCCC service delivery changes ensure:

- Essential HIV labs and services can be provided
- Psychosocial support is readily available
- Safety and protection of VCCC clients
- Safety and protection of VCCC faculty and staff



# Health and Safety

- For VCCC clients on ART and medically stable
  - Ensure adequate supply of ART (30-90 days)
    - Prezco**bix**® out-of-stock at many pharmacies due to mass buy-up for COVID-19
    - Patients taking Prezco**bix**® switched to daranavir + ritonavir
    - Patients taking Prezco**bix**® + Descovy® switched to Symtuza®
  - Reschedule routine follow-up appointments after July 1
    - Breaking social distancing likely carries higher risk than delaying routine visits and labs
- All providers are available by patient portal



# Face-to-face encounters

- All new VCCC clients with HIV establishing care
- Clients with urgent medical needs
  - Including walk-ins
- Clients with possible COVID-19
  - VCCC was the first primary care clinic at VUMC to perform SARS-CoV-2 testing



# Telemedicine

- For clients with more immediate medical concerns or needs, behavioral health visits, dietician visits, per patient preference
- Clients are contacted and offered to switch the visit to telemedicine
- Client is sent instructions prior to visit
  - Device compatibility
  - Instructions on Zoom
- Providers opens encounter through Zoom (which interfaced with Epic), conducts visit, closes the Zoom meeting at the end.
  - Intake nurse joins meeting first for pre-appointment intake assessment



# Telemedicine

- Visit is documented, assigned E&M code as a normal visit
  - Modifiers GT (telemedicine) and CR (catastrophe/disaster related)
  - Telemedicine attestation:

“This consultation was provided via telemedicine using two-way, real-time telecommunication technology between the patient and the physician. The interactive telecommunication technology included audio and video. The patient was offered telemedicine as an option for care delivery and consented to this option.

Patient location:

Provider located at a site approved by Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Other participants present with provider, with patient’s verbal consent:

Other participants present with the patient.”

- Providers are license in TN, with temporary licenses in KY, AL, MS in order to legally provide care for patients in surrounding states



# VCCC workforce

- To ensure that healthy providers are always available and to comply with state-mandated shelter in place orders, most VCCC providers conducted telemedicine visits and other patient care obligations from home.
- A limited number of VCCC medical providers remained in clinic to conduct the face-to-face visits, on a 2-4 week rotation.
- Behavioral health providers rotate on-site for in-person visits, perform telemedicine from home.
- Behavioral health consultations can be linked into the provider Zoom meeting, or as a separate telemedicine visit.
  - Frequent wellness checks are made by phone
    - Significant support, counseling, and strategies for coping with the pandemic
- Nursing and other administrative staff were called to assist at other VUMC sites for COVID-19 related activities



# Daily operations

- All VCCC faculty and staff attend a huddle before clinic (in person and via Zoom)
  - Discuss coronavirus updates at VUMC, regionally and nationally
  - Discuss any new policy/protocol changes
  - Discuss questions/concerns
  - Recognition of outstanding staff
    - Good citizen award
      - A small medal awarded to a different person daily, chosen by the previous day's recipient
      - Prizes given to the individual with the medal when milestones are hit
      - Other clinics have adopted this daily ceremony







# Daily operations

- All staff, patients, and visitors are screened for fever upon entry into building
- In-person visits are conducted normally
- Telemedicine visits are conducted by individual providers
- Walk-ins seen by available provider



# Q&A