



Feb. 25, 2020

Dear Customers,

Last week, we sent a [message](#) to all Joint Commission-accredited hospitals providing advice and resources to prepare for possible patients infected with the new strain of coronavirus — now called COVID-19. We are writing to upgrade those recommendations due to the rapidly increasing number of cases outside of China, including South Korea, Japan, Italy and Iran.

On Feb. 24, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the “sudden increase in new cases” outside of China is “deeply concerning.” He added, “This is the time for all countries, communities, families and individuals to focus on preparing.”

Although the number of cases in the United States remains small, the worsening global spread of COVID-19 means that it is time for all hospitals in the U.S. to get ready to handle a surge of COVID-19 cases. Joint Commission standards require health care organizations to have a plan for dealing with a surge of infectious patients (Infection Control 01.06.01). We recommend that hospitals review their plans, assess whether they can rapidly and reliably implement their plans as designed, and modify their plans if needed based on this assessment.

