

BILH Guidance on Return to Written Informed Consent Documents

Purpose: In the setting of the first COVID-19 surge on 3/19/20, BILH temporarily suspended certain patient signature requirements to minimize infection control risks related to sharing pens and clipboards. At that time, documentation of verbal explanation of risks and benefits were documented along with patient's verbal consent in the medical record.

With the reduced incidence of COVID-19 and a growing understanding of how the virus is transmitted, **BILH will be returning to standard practices of written informed consent over the next few weeks, with specific implementation date determined at each facility.**

Guidance:

For all patients:

- **All BILH staff and physicians should obtain patient signatures for informed consent whenever feasible.**
- All written informed consent should include an explanation of the risks and benefits to the patient and documentation of the patient's consent in the medical record and other required forms of documentation.
- Note that verbal consents remain appropriate for telehealth visits. This includes consent for the visit itself as well as consent for procedures or treatments obtained during the telehealth visit.

Additionally for patients who require Contact Precautions (gowns and gloves) for isolation precautions for any organism/condition:

1. Healthcare personnel (HCP) performs hand hygiene.
2. HCP dons appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and brings in paper, clipboard (if used) and pen for consent process.
3. Patient performs hand hygiene
4. Patient provided pen to sign the document. After signature, the pen can remain in the patient's room or be discarded. Alternatively, the pen can be wiped with a BILH hospital-approved germicidal wipe.
5. If a clipboard is used, it should also be wiped with a hospital-approved germicidal wipe.
6. HCP doffs PPE.
7. HCP performs hand hygiene.