

**\*\* PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR TEAM \*\***

## **CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE**

**(as of March 17, 2020)**

Below is a summary of child care options for employees. We are aware that this is a pressing need that has potential to impact our employees' ability to focus on their responsibilities and we are committed to addressing this problem quickly. Additional alternatives and options may become available. Interested employees are encouraged to regularly check the [child care section](#) of the Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions website for details.

### **How You Can Help**

Please continue to encourage your leaders and managers to support work-from-home arrangements for their employees. While not ideal under normal circumstances, doing so while schools are closed will reduce the demand for Partners-provided child care solutions. In addition, it is the best way to have children maintain social distancing. For those individuals who cannot work remotely, we have outlined our current and planned child care services below.

### **What's Available Now**

We are prioritizing services for those who provide or support the delivery of direct patient care and/or cannot work remotely.

- Information: FAQs include a section on [Arranging for Child Care](#) that outlines the options currently available and answers many questions. We are updating this information daily. The FAQs are also available from a link on [pulse.partners.org/coronavirus](https://pulse.partners.org/coronavirus).
- In-Home Child Care (Preferred)
  - Care.com, our existing backup child care provider, has in-home providers available now for employees at all Partners affiliates, subject to availability of caregivers. We encourage employees to use this option as a temporary solution.
  - NEW: We are temporarily reducing the cost to \$8 per hour effective March 23. Partners will pay the remainder of the cost.
  - In-home care will be available for at least 20 uses. As this situation continues to evolve, we will monitor the need and adjust accordingly.
  - Information about signing up for in-home child care is available in the FAQs referenced above.

- In-Center Child Care
  - Our backup child care centers have capacity; information about signing up for in-center child care is available in the FAQs referenced above.
  - Our traditional care centers remain open. We are evaluating how we can utilize these centers for temporary backup support and will share more information when available.
    - Families with enrolled children who decide to keep their children at home will not be charged tuition.
    - In addition, all enrollments will be held for children not attending during this time, so that children can return to their prior traditional care arrangements when circumstances permit.
- Additional Resources
  - The Partners Employee Assistance Program (EAP) ([eap.partners.org](http://eap.partners.org); 866-724-4327) can provide employees with other available child care options.

**Coming Soon (by April 1)**

- Additional backup, in-home care
  - We are partnering with Bright Horizons, a company that specializes in employer-sponsored child care, to provide additional in-home care options. This will increase our overall in-home backup care capacity by more than 500%.
  - Until Bright Horizons providers are available, we should direct employees to Care.com as noted above.
  - This cost will be \$8 per hour until further notice. Partners will pay the remainder of the cost.
  - As with Care.com, we are making this option available to employees as a temporary child care solution. It will be available to each employee for 20 days of use. We will continue to evaluate the need and may adjust as needed.
- Other resources from Bright Horizons
  - Online national database of self-selected care options through Sittercity:
    - Database of child/elder caregivers with free background checks
    - Before/after school care, nannies, babysitters, adult care, pet care, housekeeping
    - Employee pays caregiver directly
  - Discount programs for a variety of family supports
  - Various tuition discounts at BH network centers

### **Child Care Volunteers**

We have received dozens of inquiries from people across Partners HealthCare who are offering to connect employees with individuals who are not at work or school because of Coronavirus and are willing to provide child care support. While it is heartening to see so many willing to help in times of crisis, due to concerns about child safety Partners does not encourage or support distribution of lists of people who have not been vetted and background checked.

### **Additional Contingency Planning**

In addition to the in-home care mentioned above, we also have the option to work with Bright Horizons to create “pop-up” child care space in various locations should we need them. Because of the recommendation to maintain social distancing, **we have received feedback from multiple leaders that this solution should not be deployed at this time.** However, we continue to have this option should we need it in the coming weeks.

### **Talk to Us**

Please send your suggestions or questions about child care to Martha McNulty, Director of Partners Child Care Services to [childcare@partners.org](mailto:childcare@partners.org).