Universal Influenza Prevention:  
Masking FAQs for Patients & Families

1. **Why are some staff members wearing facemasks?**  
   Safety is one of our core values and the well-being of our patients/clients is our first concern. We require all staff members to get a flu shot in order to protect our patients from influenza. However, some are not able to receive the vaccine for medical or religious reasons. Staff members who have not received flu shots must wear a mask in or near an area where they might encounter patients. This is in effect throughout the flu season.

2. **Can you define “staff?”**  
   Staff includes the following individuals: all employees, licensed independent practitioners who come on the premises (with any type of staff privilege), volunteers, students, and vendors/contractors of Hartford HealthCare who perform work at any Hartford HealthCare facility and such work occurs during the declared flu season, regardless of clinical responsibility or patient contact. A Hartford HealthCare facility is defined as any campus or location controlled by Hartford HealthCare or at which Hartford HealthCare patients are located, inclusive of patient homes.

3. **Are these staff members being punished for not getting flu shots?**  
   Not at all. Wearing a mask is a way to show our patients and families that we care about their safety. It’s a way of doing everything in our power to protect patients from the serious consequences of flu.