OSF HealthCare

Building on Ebola Screening Protocols

The World Health Organization (WHO) had not yet declared COVID-19 a global health emergency, yet OSF HealthCare leaders and staff were already preparing. It was only January, when this unprecedented health crisis seemed so distant.

In fact, protocols from the 2014 outbreak of the Ebola virus remained. All patients in OSF HealthCare facilities are screened for travel outside the U.S. With the initial cases of COVID-19 in China, system leaders adopted special precautions for any patients who had traveled to China or other countries with COVID-19 cases.

For those patients, if they showed symptoms of respiratory infection they were asked to wear surgical masks and evaluated in a private room with the door closed, ideally in an airborne infection isolation room.

The first case of COVID-19—which originated in Wuhan, China—was first reported to WHO on Dec. 31, 2019. It was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020.

Illinois hospitals are innovative. Learn about the role of Shirley Ryan AbilityLab in developing a small, thin device that sits at the base of the throat and is designed to track COVID-like symptoms.