Great Teams at a Distance:
Tips to Increase Safety and Distancing in the Hospital While Still Being a Team

1. **OWN YOUR STUFF.** At the beginning of the day*, assign a phone and computer to each person on the team. Try to space people out evenly around the room, ideally with one computer between people. If there aren't enough workstations to do this, consider overflowing into the post-call team's work room. Try not to share phones throughout the shift (e.g. page to your cellphone if there aren't enough phones for everyone to have a landline and wipe down phones in between people using them). *If you can assign workstations at the beginning of the rotation, that is even better, but it might be necessary to shift workstations from day to day in order to space people out appropriately.

2. **CLEAN YOUR STUFF.** Once assigned to a workstation, each person is responsible for wiping down their computer/phone with disinfecting wipes at the beginning and end of their shifts. Clean pagers and team phones with sanitizing wipes between handoffs.

3. **BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.** Led by the senior resident, take a few seconds to pause at the beginning of rounds for everyone to internally attest to being symptom-free. Encourage a culture of staying home if sick.

4. **BE A SNOWFLAKE.** On rounds and in the team room, be a snowflake not a snowball – try to keep at least an extended arm’s distance (ideally 6 ft) between team members, as well as between team members and patients. This may mean that fewer people can go into patient rooms in order to allow enough space between people. Large teams may need to present and discuss the patient outside the room, and then have the minimum number of people necessary go into the room to evaluate the patient.

5. **CUT BACK ON CURBSIDING.** Encourage consultants and nurses to page rather than coming into the team room to discuss patients. If they do not receive a response in an appropriate timeframe then they should feel welcome come into the team room while maintaining a 6-foot distance between people. (Consider making a friendly sign for your team doors)

6. **SIGNOUT REMOTELY.** Try to sign out over the phone or secure video (e.g. HIPAA-secure Zoom) rather than in person, e.g. calling day medicine to give sign-out rather than going to the room, getting sign-out from the ICU team via phone instead of in person when transferring a patient, etc.

7. **DISPO FROM A DISTANCE.** Do disposition rounds via HIPAA-secure Zoom rather than meeting in person.

8. **PROTECT YOUR PHON-MITE.** Keep cellphones in a plastic bag for texting and dialing and take them out when making a call and/or use headphones for phone calls. Wash hands before and after touching your phone whenever possible. Encourage folks to wipe down their phones at least once a day.

9. **FINGER FOODS ARE OUT.** When possible avoid bringing in finger foods as shared snacks.

10. **DON’T BE A VECTOR.** Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before & after touching your face (specifically, eyes, nose, mouth) and before & after eating to avoid transmitting virus to yourself or to fomites that others might touch.

Innovations to make these ideas fit your particular team and hospital/clinic are encouraged!