April 5, 2020

ILLINOIS HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Member Hospitals and Health Systems
    Chief Operating Officers
    Chief Medical Officers
    Chief Nursing Officers
    Chief Quality Officers
    Chief Financial Officers
    Emergency Preparedness Contacts
    Emergency Department Directors
    Behavioral Constituency Section
    Government Relations Personnel
    In-House Counsel
    Public Relations Directors

FROM: A.J. Wilhelmi, President & CEO
      Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services & Corporate Finance
      Keneatha Johnson, Director, Quality, Safety, and Health Policy

SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update – April 5, 2020

Following is a brief recap of this weekend’s top developments.

Situational Awareness
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced 899 new cases and 31 additional deaths, bringing the total number of cases to 11,256 in 71 counties and deaths to 274. At this afternoon’s press briefing, IDPH Director Ngozi Ezike, M.D. noted that African Americans make up 30% of the cases.

Expanded Emergency Child Care, Financial Support for Emergency Child Care Centers
Governor J.B. Pritzker this afternoon announced an expansion of eligibility to support essential workers’ child care needs and an increase in financial support for emergency child care centers and homes. Effective April 1, all essential workers in healthcare, human services, essential government services, and essential infrastructure now qualify for the state’s Child Care Assistance Program. The state will cover most of the cost of care provided by emergency child care centers and homes. This expansion of eligibility includes those working as nurses and doctors, supporting staff in hospitals, grocery store clerks and food producers. Details and applications for assistance are available on the Department of Human Services’ website DHS.illinois.gov/helpishere and coronavirus.illinois.gov.

Preparing for the Surge
In recent days, Governor Pritzker and other officials have said that various models indicate that the peak surge of COVID-19 cases in the Chicago area will occur in mid-to-late April. IHA continues to work closely with state and local officials and agencies to help coordinate the hospital community’s planning...
and response with the State and the City of Chicago to the expected surge. IHA is actively advocating for the Governor’s Office and IDPH to issue statewide guidance on Crisis Standards of Care. Meanwhile, hospitals are urged to continue their planning and efforts to increase their surge capacity, as well as to engage their ethical teams/councils to discuss and consider Crisis Standards of Care. See also an IDPH planning document, “Catastrophic Incident Response Annex,” which includes information about Crisis Standards of Care.

Potential Medicaid Funding Strategies for Hospitals/Health Systems
To help address the severe financial strain imposed on hospitals due to the COVID-19 crisis, IHA has engaged the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) in discussing several potential Medicaid funding strategies, including options to expedite and increase Medicaid payments in order to maximize the benefit from the enhanced federal Medicaid matching rate enacted by Congress. One initial result is that last week the Comptroller paid out more than $200 million in pending hospital Medicaid payments. Further actions are anticipated as discussions continue. See IHA’s overview for more details.

Updated Guidance for Testing at IDPH Laboratories
IDPH has issued updated guidance for COVID-19 testing at IDPH laboratories, giving high priority to: hospitalized inpatients with suspect COVID-19; individuals with suspect COVID-19 who are residents of a congregate setting that serves a vulnerable population and are part of a potential cluster of COVID-19; outpatients with suspect COVID-19 who are involved in front-line COVID-19 response (healthcare workers and public safety workers); and outpatients with suspect COVID-19 who are employees in residential congregate settings serving vulnerable populations. IPDH says other patients can be tested via commercial, hospital and academic laboratories.

IDPH is also raising serious concerns about new antibody testing that is entering the marketplace, advising that results from antibody testing should not be used as the sole basis to diagnose or exclude infection.

IDPH Opens Community Based Testing Sites
IDPH has opened state-operated Community Based Testing Sites at the EPA Emissions Testing Facility on W. Forest Preserve Drive in Harwood Heights/Chicago and the McLean County Fairgrounds on Interstate Drive in Bloomington. To receive testing, persons must be symptomatic and meet the following screening criteria: healthcare workers with symptoms; first responders with symptoms; individuals over the age of 65 with symptoms; individuals with underlying health conditions with symptoms.

EMResource – IDPH Reminder
IDPH urges all hospitals to make sure to complete their daily bed reporting updates (twice a day at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.) and their COVID patient data seven days a week; also, update capacity numbers when necessary to be as accurate as possible.

Chicago Hospital Discharge Planning Update
Discharge planners at Chicago hospitals seeking to discharge patients who meet the confirmed or probable case definition to a high-risk home or congregate setting prior to completion of the recommended isolation period should submit a Quarantine/Isolation Facility Intake Form, via encrypted email, to coronavirussocialwork@cityofchicago.org.

Chicago Sets Up Healthcare Worker Hotel Accommodation Program
The City of Chicago will be offering hotel rooms (at the Godfrey Hotel and the LondonHouse Hotel) to accommodate emergency and critical care workers from healthcare facilities during the COVID-19 crisis, focused on healthcare personnel in direct contact with COVID-19 positive or symptomatic persons. Within that group, the city is prioritizing those who live with others and do not have a means of safe
quarantine from other household members (such as a separate room and bathroom). The program will start on Wednesday, April 8. For more information, see the Mayor’s letter to hospital administrators, the city’s Healthcare Workers Accommodation Policy, and the Employee Eligibility Letter.

**Letter to Chicago Residents: Stay Home**
The Chicago Department of Public Health in partnership with the Big Cities Health Coalition and nearly 30 other health departments shared an open letter to urge residents to stay home. The letter notes that the U.S. has not seen a public health threat like this in more than 100 years. It makes clear that the best course of action is a shared commitment to adhering to the preventative measures put forth by public health leaders—washing your hands, social distancing and most importantly: staying at home.

**Cook County Launches PPE Donation Initiative**
Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle announced a new donation program to accept unused personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders and medical staff. The program will be overseen by the County’s Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security. The County is asking closed hospitality, entertainment, educational and manufacturing facilities as well as other businesses that have PPE inventory currently not in use, to donate those items. Anyone who would like to donate PPE or has any questions should email donate@cookcountyil.gov.

**IDPH Email Portal for Receiving Hospital Questions, Comments, Ideas**
To send questions, comments or ideas to IDPH, email dph.hospitaladmin@illinois.gov. A team of staff assigned from the IDPH Director’s Office is reviewing the emails, with a goal of responding in 24 hours.

**SIREN**
To register for the State of Illinois Rapid Electronic Notification System (SIREN), go to https://siren.illinois.gov/agreement.php or email dph.siren@illinois.gov

**Resources**
- IDPH webpage on COVID-19
- Illinois COIVD-19 website for the public - coronavirus.illinois.gov
- CDC Homepage for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- Chicago Department of Public Health COVID-19 webpage
- IHA webpage on COVID-19

If you have questions or comments, please contact Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services and Corporate Finance at 217-541-1164 or tnuding@team-iha.org