



December 2, 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 – December 2, 2020**

Following is a brief recap of the most recent top developments.

**Situational Awareness**

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) *announced* today 9,757 new confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases and 238 deaths. This is the greatest number of deaths reported in one day since the start of the pandemic.

The total number of cases in the state is 748,603 in 102 counties, with a total of 12,639 deaths. IDPH says that in the past 24 hours, 85,507 test specimens have been processed, with a positivity rate of 11.4%. The preliminary seven-day statewide positivity rate for *cases* as a percent of total tests from Nov. 25– Dec. 1 is 10.6%, and the seven-day *test* positivity rate is 12.5%. Statewide COVID-19 hospitalizations in the past 24 hours decreased from 5,835 patients to 5,764 patients. Of that figure, 1,190 patients were in the ICU, with 714 patients on ventilators.

**IDPH Office Hours This Friday: I-CARE Enrollment for Hospitals**

To answer questions about I-CARE Enrollment/COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Administrator Credentialing, IDPH will hold virtual Office Hours for hospitals outside Chicago this Friday, December 4, from 1 to 2 p.m. Join the Office Hours here:

<https://illinois.webex.com/webappng/sites/illinois/meeting/info/a41546b4ae414b32a94edfa321dddf90>  
Meeting number (access code): 177 283 7503  
Meeting password: Rv23Q37Pxav

Tap to join from a mobile device:

+1-312-535-8110,,1772837503## OR +1-415-655-0002,,1772837503##

See the presentation slides from Monday's I-CARE Hospital Enrollment webinar ([click here](#)).

### **Chicago Preparing for Vaccine Distribution**

On Tuesday, Chicago Public Health Commissioner Dr. Allison Arwady said the city expects to begin vaccinating hospital and healthcare workers later this month, possibly by the third week of December. She said the city could provide vaccines to lower-risk residents in the spring and children by the summer, depending on vaccine production and the progress of trials. The city anticipates initially getting 20,000 to 25,000 doses of vaccine and continuing to get regular allotments from the government. For more information, see the Chicago Department of Public Health's [PowerPoint presentation](#) and new COVID-19 Vaccine [website](#).

### **CDC Panel Recommends Vaccine Priority Groups**

On Tuesday, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) panel voted 13-1 to recommend giving health workers and long-term care facility residents the first COVID-19 vaccine doses once they are cleared for use. According to [presentations](#) made to the CDC's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#), an outside group of medical experts, there are approximately 21 million healthcare workers and 3 million long-term care facility residents in the U.S.

### **CDC Refines Quarantine Guidance**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [announced](#) today that it is refining its guidance on COVID-19 quarantines. Since the start of the pandemic, the CDC has recommended that those who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 quarantine for 14 days after exposure. The CDC continues to recommend quarantining for 14 days as the best way to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. But after reviewing and analyzing new research and modeling data, the CDC says it has identified two acceptable alternative quarantine periods. Under these options, quarantine can end after ten days without a COVID-19 test if the person has reported no symptoms or after seven days with a negative test result if the person has reported no symptoms.

The CDC also says everyone should follow the specific guidance from their local public health authorities about how long they should quarantine based on local conditions and needs. The CDC says reducing the length of quarantine may make it easier for people to take this critical public health action by reducing the economic hardship associated with a longer period, especially if they cannot work during that time.

### **Governor Recognizes More Healthcare Heroes**

At his daily COVID-19 press briefing this afternoon, Governor J.B. Pritzker recognized five more healthcare heroes from hospitals across the state. Those recognized today were:

- Patty Boxx, environmental services associate, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia;
- Terri McCrery, infection preventionist, OSF HealthCare St. Mary Medical Center in Galesburg;
- Sarasamma Mohanan, respiratory therapist, AMITA Health Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center in Chicago;
- Pam Mohr, housekeeping leader, Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital in Dixon; and
- Eric Tritch, Vice President for Supply Chain and Logistics at UChicago Medicine.

See the Governor's remarks about these heroes on his Facebook video (starting at the 2 minute mark and running about 6 minutes):

<https://www.facebook.com/2012219015559115/videos/126690129089022>

Governor Pritzker recently began highlighting the pandemic's unsung heroes, part of an effort to showcase the dedication, hard work and sacrifice of healthcare professionals.

### **New Hospital Operations Toolkit for COVID-19**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response TRACIE has developed a new *toolkit* as a single source of information for hospital emergency managers and planners preparing to manage large numbers of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The toolkit is comprised of four primary sections: Capacity, Infection Prevention and Control, Patient Care Policies/Processes and Administration.

### **GAO Urges More Federal Action on COVID-19 Response**

On Monday, the *U.S. Government Accountability Office* (GAO) issued its *fourth report* on the implementation of the CARES Act and other pandemic relief measures. To help improve the nation's response, GAO is making 11 new recommendations for agencies. Targeted areas needing attention from the Administration and the Congress include medical supplies, vaccines and therapeutics, COVID-19 testing guidance, estimates of the number of individuals relying on unemployment insurance, nursing home care, and economic impact payments.

With regard to medical supplies, although the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency are working to mitigate supply shortages and expand the medical supply chain, shortages of certain items persist. GAO raised this issue previously and this time surveyed public health and emergency management officials from all states, the District of Columbia, and all territories, and found that:

- Most states reported no shortages of swabs or transport media, but about one-third to one-half reported shortages in other types of testing supplies such as rapid point-of-care tests, reagents and testing instruments.
- Most states said they were largely able to fulfill requests for PPE from organizations and entities within their states. At the same time, certain items, such as nitrile gloves, remain scarce.
- About one-third of responding states indicated that they were "greatly" or "completely" concerned about having enough supplies to administer COVID-19 vaccines. An additional 21 states indicated that they were "moderately" concerned.

The GAO also raised concerns about transparency on COVID-19 testing guidelines, which are expected to evolve as new information about the coronavirus emerges, to avoid confusion and reduced trust in government. HHS agreed with the GAO's recommendation that it needs to ensure that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention clearly discloses the scientific rationale for any change to testing guidelines at the time the change is made.

### **Chicago Moves Eight States to "Red" Category in Travel Order**

The same 46 states and Puerto Rico are still under Chicago's *travel quarantine order* for those returning to the city as of this Friday. But eight states are being moved to most serious "red" classification that mandates a two-week quarantine: Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma and Rhode Island. Only travelers from Maine, Vermont and Hawaii have no additional safety requirements.

### **Resources**

- [IDPH COVID-19 webpage](#) and [Coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://www.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](mailto:tnuding@team-iha.org).