TO: Chief Executive Officers, Member Hospitals and Health Systems  
Chief Operating Officers  
Chief Medical Officers  
Chief Nursing Officers  
Chief Quality Officers  
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Emergency Preparedness Contacts  
Emergency Department Directors  
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FROM: A.J. Wilhelmi, President & CEO  
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SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update – July 6, 2020

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

Situational Awareness
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced today 614 new COVID-19 cases and 6 deaths (the lowest one-day death total since March 25). The total number of cases in the state is 147,865 in 102 counties, with a total of 7,026 deaths. IDPH says that in the past 24 hours, 21,134 test specimens have been processed, with a positivity rate of 2.9%. The preliminary seven-day statewide positivity rate from June 29 to July 5 is 2.6%. Statewide COVID-19 hospitalizations in the past 24 hours increased from 1,326 patients to 1,395 patients. Of that figure, 321 patients were in the ICU, with 151 patients on ventilators. Scott County, which had been the only county in the state without a COVID-19 case, reported its first case last Thursday.

Chicago Issues Travel Quarantine Order
As of today (July 6), an Emergency Travel Order is in effect in Chicago, directing travelers entering or returning to the city from states experiencing a surge in new COVID-19 cases to quarantine for a period of 14 days. The order applies to states that have a case rate greater than 15 new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 resident population, per day, over a 7-day rolling average. Violators are subject to fines of $100-$500 per day, up to $7,000. There are exceptions for essential workers – including healthcare workers – traveling for work purposes and for other specific circumstances. Information about the exceptions to the order and answers to other questions can be found here.

Chicago officials say the emergency order is a response to increased and high rates of COVID-19 transmission in certain states and builds on ongoing enforcement measures by the city to slow the
transmission of COVID-19, representing a cautious, incremental and evidence-based approach to reopening the city. The list of states (now 15 states) included in the order will be updated every Tuesday, and the order will be in effect until further notice.

**IDPH Supplemental FAQs on Elective Surgeries**

Over the weekend, the Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) issued Supplemental FAQs on its Elective Surgery Guidance. Among the key questions and answers in the document are:

Questions: When is COVID-19 testing required prior to an elective surgical procedure? Is COVID-19 testing required only when using general anesthesia or is it mandatory for all levels and types of anesthesia/analgesia?

Answers: The following individuals should be tested for COVID-19:

- Those patients admitted to the hospital for an inpatient elective procedure in an operating room;
- Those patients whose outpatient elective procedure will take place in an operating room or a procedure room in a hospital or ambulatory surgical treatment center (ASTC);
- Those patients having an elective procedure under general anesthesia; and
- Those patients (regardless of type of anesthesia) undergoing an elective procedure of the aerodigestive tract, including endoscopy, colonoscopy, or bronchoscopy.

Question: Do patients have to be tested within 72 hours of the procedure?

Answer: Facilities should test each patient within 72 hours of a scheduled procedure and the patient must self-quarantine from the time of the test until the surgery.

Question: Where should pre-op patients get tested?

Answer: Referring providers should make arrangement for testing, just as they would for any other required pre-procedural evaluation. COVID-19 testing is reimbursed by major insurance carriers without a patient copay.

**IDPH Updates Interim Guidance on MIS-C**

Late last week, IDPH issued updated interim guidance to ensure clinicians are aware of current guidance regarding *Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) Associated with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*, including the case definition and guidance on reporting to local health departments.

IDPH says essential actions on MIS-C include:

- All health care providers should maintain a high index of suspicion for MIS-C.
- Suspected cases of MIS-C should be referred immediately to a tertiary care center with a pediatric intensive care unit (PICU).
- Tertiary care centers are asked to consider a collaborative approach in the management of these patients by convening a multispecialty committee (comprised of pediatric critical care, cardiology, hematology, infectious disease, and rheumatology/immunology) that provides coordinated clinical care guidance for each patient while (1) confirming patients meet the case definition, and (2) ensuring that appropriate diagnostic and treatment resources are readily available for this patient population.
- Hospital infection preventionists should be notified immediately upon recognition of patients meeting case definition to initiate public health reporting.
- Health care providers and laboratories are required by the Control of Communicable Disease Code to report suspected or known MIS-C associated with COVID-19 cases to the local health department.
- When an MIS-C associated with COVID-19 case is suspected or known to be (laboratory-confirmed case) the cause of death, this should be reported to the local health department.
- Hospitals must submit pre-defined data elements on MIS-C patients through Illinois’ National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (I-NEDSS). NOTE: Electronic laboratory reporting alone will not suffice for this syndrome.
Reminder: COVID-19 Hospitalization Data for Next Remdesivir Allocation Due by 7 PM Tonight
Hospitals are asked to submit data on the number of currently hospitalized COVID-19 patients every two weeks to inform how the Department of Health and Human Services allocates up to 500,000 additional treatment courses of remdesivir for purchase by hospitals through September. Hospitals should submit the data to the TeleTracking web portal by 7 p.m. CDT tonight.

Split Rulings on Governor’s COVID-19 Executive Orders
Court battles continue over Governor J.B. Pritzker’s legal authority in issuing stay-at-home orders during the pandemic. Last Thursday, a Clay County judge ruled in favor of a Republican legislator in his lawsuit against the Governor. The state will appeal the ruling. It is not immediately clear what the lower court ruling will mean for Illinoisans, who are no longer under the stay-at-home order that was in place when the lawmaker filed the suit. Also last Thursday, a federal judge ruled against the state Republican Party, which sued the Governor claiming he violated the GOP’s constitutional rights to assemble, in groups of more than 10, during the pandemic. On Saturday, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh denied an emergency appeal by the GOP, but the party is continuing to push the suit in the lower courts.

CDC/FDA Update on Hazardous Hand Sanitizers
Most commercially available alcohol-based hand sanitizers or rubs contain ethanol or isopropanol as active ingredients. In June, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advised consumers not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by “Eskbiochem SA de CV” in Mexico, due to the potential presence of methanol, a “toxic alcohol”, as an active ingredient, which can cause blindness and/or death when absorbed through the skin or swallowed. Since then, FDA has identified additional products that contain methanol and is working with manufacturers and distributors on a voluntary recall of these products.

CMS COVID-19 Stakeholder Calls This Week
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) hosts recurring stakeholder engagement calls to share information related to the agency’s response to COVID-19. This week’s calls include:
Tuesday, July 7
- Home Health and Hospice: 2:00-2:30 p.m. CDT. Dial-in: 833-614-0820; Passcode: 9480618; Webcast available here.
- COVID-19 Office Hours: 4:00-5:00 p.m. CDT. Dial-in: 833-614-0820; Passcode: 3048844; Webcast available here.
Wednesday, July 8
- Nursing Homes: 3:30-4:00 p.m. CDT. Dial-in: 833-614-0820; Passcode: 2997138; Webcast here.
- Dialysis Organizations: 4:30-5:00 p.m. CDT. Dial-in: 833-614-0820; Passcode: 8481378; Webcast available here.
Thursday, July 9
- Nurses: 2:00-2:30 p.m. CDT. Dial-in: 833-614-0820; Passcode: 9386539; Webcast available here.

President Signs PPP Extension Legislation
On Saturday, President Trump signed legislation to extend the application period for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) through August 8. The measure allows eligible applicants to access approximately $130 billion in PPP funds, which has been a financial lifeline for eligible hospitals.

Resources
- IDPH webpage on COVID-19
- 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