March 26, 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
   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 – March 26, 2020

Special thanks to the many hospital CEOs and other leaders who were able to join us for our conference call this afternoon on COVID-19 and the Hospital Assessment Program, with special guest Governor Pritzker.

Governor’s Urgent Request on EMResource and SIREN
On today’s call the Governor expressed his gratitude to hospitals and their nurses, physicians and other healthcare employees for “doing the work of angels” to respond to the pandemic. The Governor also made a personal and urgent request to hospital leaders on two key issues:

- The Governor urged all hospitals to respond to and answer a list of questions in EMResource. Key areas of focus in the daily survey include: numbers of COVID-19 patients and PUIs, and those in ICU beds and on ventilators; hospital readiness; PPE; testing materials; and lab capacity. The Governor said that the information and data from this survey is critically needed to coordinate the COVID-19 response in every region of the state.

- The Governor also urged all hospitals and physicians to sign up for SIREN, the State of Illinois Rapid Electronic Notification System, which the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) uses to send COVID-19 alerts and the latest, updated guidance. To register for SIREN, go to https://siren.illinois.gov/agreement.php or send an email to dph.siren@illinois.gov

Here is a brief recap of today’s other top developments.
Situational Awareness

At today’s press briefing, IDPH announced 673 new COVID-19 cases in Illinois, for a total of 2,538 cases in 37 counties statewide. Seven new deaths were reported.

Congress Moving on COVID-19 Relief Package – IHA Summary
On Friday morning, the U.S. House will begin considering the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act. The U.S. Senate passed the legislative package on March 25. The IHA-supported legislation includes significant funding and support for hospitals and health systems, totaling over $100 billion. See IHA’s summary of key hospital-related provisions in the package.

IHA 1135 Waiver Request for All Illinois Hospitals Partially Approved
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today approved a portion of IHA’s Section 1135 waiver request on behalf of all Illinois hospitals. The approval, which mirrors approvals given to other states, includes, but is not limited to, EMTALA, physical environment, verbal orders, medical records timing, discharge planning, and reporting requirements. See an IHA summary for more details.

Illinois Disaster Declaration Approved
Gov. Pritzker announced this afternoon that President Trump has approved Illinois’ disaster declaration. This declaration will make available federal funds for crisis counseling, local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations for emergency protective measures, including telehealth expansion.

Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund
The Governor announced the creation of the Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund. Through the United Way of Illinois and the Alliance of Illinois Community Foundations, in collaboration with the Office of the Governor, the fund is designed to help “support residents in need of emergency food and basic supplies, interim housing and shelter, primary healthcare services, utility assistance, direct financial assistance for household expenses, supports for children and other vulnerable populations, and nonprofit safety and operations assistance.” See more details in a press release.

Additional CDC Resources
IDPH announced the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed an Excel spreadsheet for healthcare organizations to use to develop an availability estimate of personal protective equipment (PPE). Information on how to use the PPE burn rate calculator are available here.

The CDC has updated the following resources and guidance:

- Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
- Comprehensive Hospital Preparedness Checklist for COVID-19; and
- Collection and Submission of Postmortem Specimens from Deceased Persons with Known or Suspected COVID-19, March 2020 (Interim Guidance).

Chicago Lakefront Closed
Due to the influx of residents not complying with social distancing and the state’s stay-at-home order, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot has ordered the Lake Michigan trail and all adjacent park areas closed until further notice. A city press release notes that the Chicago Police Dept. will start issuing warnings and then citations and may make arrests, if people continue to violate the order.

Hospital Assessment Program Update
IHA continues to engage in intense discussions and negotiations with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and the Legislative Medicaid Work Group on the Phase 2 redesign of the Hospital Assessment Program. We are making considerable progress and anticipate reaching a final agreement soon. As soon as a
final agreement is reached, IHA will present the final model and hospital-specific impacts to the IHA Board and then to the membership. The Illinois General Assembly, which has been in recess due to the COVID-19 pandemic, may reconvene in a few weeks in order to take action on must-pass issues, including the state’s COVID-19 response and the assessment program.

**IDPH Email Portal for Receiving Hospital Questions, Comments, Ideas**

At the request of IHA, IDPH established an email portal: dph.hospitaladmin@illinois.gov. This designated email address is reserved to receive questions, comments, and ideas from the hospital community and IHA. A team of staff assigned from the IDPH Director’s Office is reviewing the emails, with a goal of responding within 24 hours.

**Resources**

- IDPH webpage on COVID-19
- Illinois COVID-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