



May 11, 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
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SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update – May 11, 2020

Following is a brief recap of today's top developments.

Situational Awareness

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced 1,266 new COVID-19 cases and 54 deaths. The total number of cases in the state is 79,007 in 98 counties, with a total of 3,459 deaths. IDPH says that in the past 24 hours, 12,441 test specimens have been processed. Statewide, the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients increased in the past 24 hours by 26 to 4,319. Of that figure, 1,248 patients are in ICU (an increase of 16) with 730 patients on ventilators (an increase of 21).

For the first time, Governor J.B. Pritzker today held his daily press briefing via a remote broadcast after a member of his senior staff tested positive for COVID-19. The Governor, along with about 20 staff members, are now working from home. The Governor was tested Sunday, with a negative result.

Revised Projected Peak Surge in Illinois: Mid-June

The Governor said the state's COVID-19 cases are now projected to peak in mid-June, according to several models that the state uses. A later and lower peak is a positive indicator of "flattening the curve" and a result of a slowdown of the state's rate of transmission, which leads to a slower rate of increase over a longer period. The Governor noted that under current mitigations, hospital bed and ventilator capacity remains sufficient to treat COVID-19 patients.

Related to his Restore Illinois plan to re-open the state, the Governor said three of the four regions are on pace to meet the metrics to move forward to the next phase after a 28-day period: North-Central, Central and Southern. As of midnight, May 8, the test positivity rates were 9.1% for the North-Central region, 6.0% for the Central region, and 10.5% for the Southern region. However, the Northeast region's rate was at 22.3%, above the 20% cap on this metric to move to the next phase. All four regions are currently exceeding hospital surge capacity metrics (at least 14% availability in medical/surgical and ICU beds and ventilators). For more details, see Restore Metrics and Frequently Asked Questions.

Illinois Receives Remdesivir Shipment – HHS Request for Data for Future Distributions

Over the weekend, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response announced an allocation plan with Gilead for the drug remdesivir, and Illinois received its first shipment of the drug. The shipment was directed to hospitals that have seen the most critically ill COVID-19 patients, safety net hospitals and hospitals that treat large communities of color. See an IDPH memo on the state's distribution methodology and the hospital distribution list.

To help determine the federal government's future remdesivir distribution, HHS is asking hospitals to submit additional COVID-19-related information by 7 p.m. CDT Tuesday, May 12. Hospitals should log into the COVID-19 web portal at <https://teletracking.protect.hhs.gov>, using the same login information that was used to provide year-to-date coronavirus-related admissions. Hospitals are asked to provide the number of currently hospitalized coronavirus patients, and of those admissions, the number of currently hospitalized patients requiring placement in an intensive care unit. Record these values as of May 10, or the date you are submitting. IDPH is aware of the new request for the data, which is not currently included in the dataset that IDPH sends to HHS, and urges Illinois hospitals to comply with the HHS request.

National Hospital Week: Thank You to Our Members

National Hospital Week, which officially kicked off on Sunday, has taken on much greater significance this year because of the unprecedented fight against COVID-19. Illinois hospitals and health systems are tirelessly and heroically leading this fight on the front lines across our state, and for this, IHA offers a heartfelt thank you. To showcase the herculean efforts of Illinois hospitals and health systems and the perseverance of your healthcare professionals, IHA created a video, launched today. Please share the video with your employees, your community and your legislators. All photos and footage in the video come from hospital submissions from around the state to our "Going the Distance" digital campaign.

IHA's Going the Distance campaign spotlights hospitals and healthcare professionals as heroes who know no boundaries. Please continue to share your stories for our Healthcare Heroes webpage and social media. To submit your stories, photos and videos, contact Valerie Culver at vculver@team-iha.org or 630-276-5526.

IHA Letter to Delegation Requests Additional Resources

In a letter sent today to the Illinois Congressional delegation, IHA President & CEO A.J. Wilhelmi urged additional direct funding for hospitals be included in the next COVID-19 response legislation. The letter also calls for liability protections, improvements to the repayment terms for the Medicare Accelerated Payment program, increased access to health insurance coverage, and bonus pay, childcare, transportation and other services to be provided to frontline and essential workers through the tax code.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is expected to release a Democratic COVID-19 bill this week, which could top \$2 trillion. Meanwhile, Senate Republicans, led by Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) say the upper chamber will wait until at least late May or early June to consider its own package. McConnell has also drawn a clear line on the issue of liability saying he will oppose any bill that does not include protection for businesses.

Chicago Expands Testing

Chicago will open six new testing sites aimed at addressing disparities among black and brown residents and ramping up the city's capacity ahead of a potential reopening. One of the sites will open in the parking lot at the White Sox's Guaranteed Rate Field in Bridgeport for asymptomatic first responders and healthcare and other essential workers. Other sites will be largely aimed at the city's black and Latino communities, including Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy in Little Village, Dr. Jorge Prieto Math and Science Academies in Hanson Park, Kennedy-King College in Englewood, Senka Park in Gage Park and Gately Park in Pullman. Chicago officials will work with Community Organized Relief Effort and Curative-Korva to run the sites, and with community groups to help with registration for tests.

FDA Issues EUA for New Antigen Test

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued the first emergency use authorization (EUA) for a COVID-19 antigen test, a new category of test for use in the ongoing pandemic. This type of diagnostic test quickly detects fragments of proteins found on or within the virus by testing samples collected from the nasal cavity. The EUA was issued to Quidel Corporation for the Sofia 2 SARS Antigen FIA.

IDPH Revised Notice on Isolation Period for COVID-19 Cases

IDPH released a notice on changes to the isolation period for COVID-19 cases. When symptom-based strategies are used, 10 days is now consistent for return-to-work criteria for both healthcare workers and non-healthcare workers. A 14-day quarantine period remains unchanged for close contact to COVID-19 cases.

Guidance Regarding Media and Film Crews

The HHS Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has issued guidance to healthcare providers reminding them that the HIPAA Privacy Rule does not allow the media and film crews to access healthcare facilities where patients' protected health information is accessible unless written authorization has been obtained from the patients concerned in advance. The COVID-19 pandemic does not change these requirements.

Legislation Addresses Nurses, Physician Shortages

Illinois Representative Brad Schneider (D-10) recently announced bipartisan legislation (supported by IHA) to address healthcare professional shortages by recapturing unused immigrant visas and making them available to doctors and nurses. The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act would recapture 25,000 unused immigrant visas for nurses and 15,000 for doctors, and allocate them to professionals able to help in the fight against COVID-19. The bill is the House companion to legislation introduced by Illinois Senator Dick Durbin.

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