



May 6, 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 6, 2020

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

Situational Awareness

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced 2,270 new COVID-19 cases and 136 deaths. The total number of cases in the state is 68,232 in 97 counties, with a total of 2,974 deaths. IDPH says that in the past 24 hours, 14,974 test specimens have been processed. Statewide, the number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients increased in the past 24 hours from 4,780 to 4,832. Of that figure, 1,231 patients are in ICU beds (a decrease of 35) with 780 patients on ventilators (same number as reported yesterday).

IDPH Director Ngozi Ezike M.D., said that approximately 30% of people who test positive may need hospitalization. Approximately 90% of people who die from COVID-19 have co-morbidities, which includes advanced age and compromised immune systems.

FAQs on Elective Surgeries and Procedures

IDPH has released Frequently Asked Questions about elective surgeries and procedures during the COVID-19 crisis, as a follow up to its April 24 guidance. Under the guidance, hospitals and ASTCs may begin to perform elective surgeries and procedures as soon as May 11 if they meet certain criteria. The FAQs document covers questions and answers related to COVID-19 testing requirements, including a clarification on where preoperative testing specimens should be analyzed: "Hospitals and practices should have access to nucleic acid-based SARS-CoV-2 testing (e.g., via an in-house or commercial

laboratory). IDPH laboratory capacity is prioritized for high-risk congregate care sites, outbreak investigations, and other priorities identified by the director.”

Focus on Disparities in Latino Communities

In separate press briefings this afternoon, Governor J.B. Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot released new data showing the impact of COVID-19 on Latino communities and called for action to address disparities and inequities. In Illinois, 26,517 individuals who have been tested for COVID-19 to date checked the box for Hispanic. Of these 26,517 individuals, 15,959 have tested positive for COVID-19 - a positivity rate of 60%, nearly three times the state's average. The Governor said this highlights decades of institutional inequities and obstacles for Latino communities, now being amplified during the pandemic.

Saying his administration has placed equity at the core of its public health response to COVID-19 to address the challenges and needs of the communities who are most vulnerable, the Governor highlighted several measures designed to mitigate the impact of the pandemic in the state’s Latino communities, focusing on testing sites, medical access, housing support, welcoming centers and workers’ rights.

Mayor Lightfoot recently established the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team (RERRT) initiative – a data-driven, community-based, and community-driven mitigation of COVID-19 illness and death in Black and Latinx communities. The Mayor and RERRT are urging Chicago-based hospital and healthcare providers to participate in this initiative. Participants are asked to provide contact information to the team by May 8, with communications beginning May 15. Details are outlined in a memo; a presentation outlines suggested practices for racial equity rapid response outreach.

Mayor Lightfoot announced today that SEIU Local 1, UNITE HERE Local 1, and the Construction and General Laborers’ District Council of Chicago and Vicinity will work with the RERRT to protect essential workers and address inequities across the city. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Chicago continues to increase, and over the past month, the data show an increasingly disproportionate impact on the Latinx community. In early April, the Latinx population represented 14% of cases and 9% of deaths in Chicago. New data show Latinx Chicagoans now represent 37% of cases and 25% of deaths.

LTC Services for Non-Veteran Medicaid Enrollees at VA

The state recognizes that there are circumstances that impede the return of a resident of a long-term care facility (LTC) to the facility after an acute care hospital stay related to COVID-19. The state, through its Emergency Management Agency, has entered into an engagement with the Veterans Administration (VA) that allows for maximal utilization of VA resources during the pandemic. One dimension of this is the ability for a limited number of non-veteran Medicaid enrollees who have been discharged from a hospital to receive long-term care services at one of three Veterans Administration Medical Centers (VAMCs) -- Hines VAMC (Maywood); North Chicago VAMC (North Chicago); or VA Illiana (Danville).

The availability of the services for Medicaid enrollees is on a first-come, first-served basis when an individual meets criteria for the services these centers can offer. The patient does not need to be a veteran. For more information, see an IHA fact sheet.

IHA, Hospitals Honor Nurses

Today is National Nurses Day, a time to recognize and celebrate the profoundly important role of nurses in healthcare. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the heroic work of nurses has never been clearer. IHA and our member hospitals and health systems honor Illinois nurses for their compassion, dedication and unyielding efforts to care for patients in this unprecedented public health crisis.

As part of IHA’s “Going the Distance” campaign, nurses are featured in several stories on our Healthcare Heroes webpage. National Nurses Day kicks off National Nurses Week, which culminates on May 12, the

birthday of Florence Nightingale, who founded modern nursing at the end of the 19th century. For National Nurses Week and National Hospital Week, which begins May 10, IHA will release a video highlighting the work of nurses and hospitals in the fight against COVID-19.

Among the nearly 3 million nurses across the U.S., Illinois counts 183,000 registered nurses providing direct patient or serving in leadership roles. We salute Illinois' nurses today and throughout National Nurses Week. You can share your appreciation on [IHA's Twitter page](#) using #NationalNursesWeek.

Tracking COVID-19 Related Drug Shortages

The Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHP) and IHA are assisting IDPH and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to identify and monitor medication shortages related to the COVID-19 pandemic. All Illinois hospital pharmacy directors are asked to complete the medication dashboard at: [/IHAMAPS/media/media/ICHP-IHA-COVID-19-Medication-Shortage-Dashboard-2-0_2.xlsx](#) by identifying the drug and level of COVID-related shortage they are experiencing. The shortages will be reported to IDPH, IEMA, and the Food and Drug Administration as they are identified in order to mitigate them.

Send the completed dashboard to Scott Meyers, ICHP Executive Vice President, at scottm@ichpnet.org. The form needs to be completed one time per hospital; however, if your institution subsequently experiences a new shortage, mark the change and send it to Meyers. A new form will be distributed weekly by ICHP and IHA to capture all COVID-related shortage trends.

IHA Releases Waiver Resource Guide

Since the early days of COVID-19, IHA has been advocating with the Governor's Office and state agencies for greater regulatory flexibility to allow hospitals to focus their time and resources responding to the pandemic. Through those advocacy efforts, many regulatory waivers have been provided and are in place through the remainder of the Governor's Disaster proclamation. A comprehensive list of approved, denied and requested waivers can be found on the [IHA COVID-19 webpage](#). This document will be updated as further waiver flexibility is determined.

CDC Webinars for Long-Term Care Facilities

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has launched a new COVID-19 mini webinar training series for frontline long-term care and nursing home staff. The five following short educational webinars are now available on You Tube:

- [Sparkling Surfaces: Stop COVID-19's Spread](#)
- [Clean Hands: Combat COVID-19!](#)
- [Closely Monitor Residents for COVID-19](#)
- [Keep COVID-19 Out!](#)
- [Use Personal Protective Equipment Correctly for COVID-19](#)

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