March 10, 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
    Emergency Preparedness Contacts
    Emergency Department Directors
    Government Relations Personnel
    Public Relations Directors

FROM: A.J. Wilhelmi, President & CEO
      Keneatha Johnson, Director, Quality, Safety, and Health Policy

SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update and Readiness Survey (Final Reminder)

To support hospitals and health systems in their ongoing efforts to prepare and care for patients potentially exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19, IHA will continue providing updates on the latest developments, guidance and other important information about the novel coronavirus. Over the past several days, we heard from many of you, and IHA applauds your efforts. As the number of cases increase across the state and nation it is paramount that we continue to work collaboratively to ensure the safety of patients, healthcare workforce and communities.

IHA Readiness Survey (Action Requested by Friday, March 13)
Last week, IHA issued a short survey to assist hospitals with their preparedness planning. The information provided will be shared with hospital and health systems leaders and key policymakers. This brief survey should only take about 5 minutes to complete. You can only take the survey once, but you can edit your responses until the survey is closed on Friday, March 13. To access the survey, click here. All hospital-specific information from the survey is confidential and will only be shared in the aggregate.

Situational Awareness
On Monday afternoon, Governor J.B. Pritzker issued a disaster proclamation to unlock additional federal resources and help the state prepare for the potential of further spread of COVID-19. The proclamation formalizes emergency procedures already underway across state government by activating the State Emergency Operations Center, physically bringing together decision-makers from every state agency and the state’s mutual aid network to deploy resources as necessary during this public health threat. See Governor’s press release here.
Also Monday, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced four new COVID-19 cases in Illinois, bringing the total to 11. All four cases are in good condition. The first two cases in the state announced last month have recovered without known transmission to additional individuals. The remaining patients are in isolation either at home or in a hospital. See IDPH’s press release [here](#).

### Appropriate Use of IDPH COVID-19 State Hotline (1-800-889-3931)

IDPH has asked that we share the following clarifying information. The IDPH COVID-19 hotline does not authorize testing – that is done at the discretion of healthcare providers, after consultation with the county health department as needed. Sick patients presenting to hospitals should not be referred to the hotline. Hospitals are encouraged to provide the hotline number to patients who call them with general questions.

### Updated CDC Guidance

Sunday night, CDC updated the COVID diagnostic testing criteria to:

- Prioritize testing of symptomatic older adults and those with co-morbid conditions.
- Prioritize healthcare personnel who have had close contact with suspected or lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients or traveled to areas with community transmission.
- Emphasize consideration for testing symptomatic individuals in communities with known community transmission. ([Click here](#) to see the updated guidance.)

The CDC says clinicians should work with local/state health departments to coordinate testing through public health laboratories and should use their judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested.

### CDC COCA Call Thursday, March 12 from 1 to 2 p.m. CDT

During this Clinical Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) Call, presenters will focus on current information about COVID-19 as it relates to children and pregnant women. Topics will include infection prevention and control measures in inpatient obstetric healthcare settings ([CDC’s Interim Considerations for Infection Prevention and Control of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Inpatient Obstetric Healthcare Settings](#)) and resources available to care for pediatric patients. Click this link to join: [https://zoom.us/j/200932054](https://zoom.us/j/200932054)

Or iPhone one-tap: US: +16468769923, 200932054# or +16699006833, 200932054#

Or Telephone: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 669 900 6833

Webinar ID: 200 932 054

### N95 Respirators

As part of government-wide efforts to respond to the outbreak of COVID-19, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) intends to purchase 500 million N95 respirators over the next 18 months for the Strategic National Stockpile. Through guaranteed orders, this acquisition encourages manufacturers to immediately increase production of N95s for use by healthcare professionals. The guaranteed orders reassure manufacturers they will not be left with excess supplies if private sector orders are cancelled once the COVID-19 response subsides.

### Federal Funding Supplemental

On March 6, President Trump signed an $8.3 billion spending package to combat the novel coronavirus. The funding measure includes $300 million for hospital and health systems’ efforts to prepare for and
respond to the outbreak. Funds will be allocated through HHS' Assistant Secretary for Preparedness. Once details on how the dollars will be directed is made available, IHA will provide an update. Under the funding package, IDPH is expected to receive at least $14.7 million and CDPH is expected to receive $8.7 million. Separately, CDC will provide $2.75 million in initial funding to IDPH and $1.75 million to CDPH for coronavirus surveillance, infection control, and surge staffing activities.

Latest Resources and Guidance

- IDPH webpage on COVID-19
- CDC Homepage for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- Updated CDC Guidance on Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019
- CDC Guidance for Healthcare Professionals
- CDC Guidance for Laboratories
- CDC Travel Guidance
- ASPR COVID-19 Healthcare Planning Checklist
- Chicago Department of Public Health COVID-19 webpage
- IHA webpage on COVID-19
- Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases by Johns Hopkins CSSE

Also, IDPH is issuing updates and alerts on COVID-19 via the State of Illinois Rapid Electronic Notification System (SIREN), a secure web-based messaging and alerting system that leverages email, phone, text, pagers and other messaging formats to provide 24/7/365 notification, alerting, and flow of critical information. To register for SIREN, go to https://siren.illinois.gov/agreement.php

For other testing questions, additional information or other questions, please contact your local health department. If they are not available, please contact the IDPH Communicable Disease Section at 217-782-2016. If they cannot be reached, use the IDPH after hours number 800-782-7860. Local health departments should contact IDPH for consultations on Persons Under Investigation (PUIs).

If you have questions or comments, please contact Keneatha Johnson, Director, Quality, Safety, and Health Policy at 630-276-5415 or kjohnson@team-aha.org.