



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.

December 8, 2022



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TO: Marin County Healthcare Providers and Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) Staff

RE: Winter Respiratory Illness Surge

Situation Update

Influenza, RSV, and COVID-19 transmission rates each continue to rise in Marin County and across the region with no signs of abating locally. Compared to the prior week, local wastewater levels for influenza, RSV and COVID-19 increased by 26%, 33%, and 16% respectively. Influenza A levels in wastewater are 90 times greater than they were mid-October

COVID-19 case rates increased 37% over the past week. Influenza percent positivity—the percent of tests performed on patients with symptoms that are positive for flu -- is the highest level ever for the month of December (25%). High levels of viral transmission are substantially increasing vaccine-preventable respiratory illnesses, resulting in patient surges into Marin County emergency departments and increased hospitalizations.

Healthcare providers and long-term care facilities play a critical role in mitigating day-to-day patient surges into our healthcare system.

Actions Requested of Providers and Facilities

1. Vaccinations

- Healthcare providers should identify and offer COVID-19 bivalent boosters and seasonal flu vaccination to all patients who live in residential care settings as well as patients with higher risk for [severe flu](#) and [COVID](#).
- LTCF should provide or arrange for bivalent COVID-19 boosters and seasonal flu vaccination.
 - Educate staff, residents and families about vaccine efficacy and safety ([CDPH FAQ Bivalent Booster](#))
 - If your facility does not independently provide COVID-19 vaccine onsite, notify Public Health at LTCFReport@marincounty.org

2. Masking

- Marin County Public Health recommends wearing a mask in public indoor settings. Ensure your mask provides the best [fit and filtration](#) (e.g., N95 and KN95 respirators).
- Marin County Public Health strongly recommends that vulnerable persons and those who have household or social contact with a vulnerable person wear a mask in public indoor settings.

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH) [requires](#) masks in Healthcare Settings, Long Term Care Settings & Adult and Senior Care Facilities
3. **Treatment.** Ensure all patients and residents diagnosed with COVID-19 and/or flu are provided access to treatment.
 - Communicate with healthcare providers and pharmacy partners to ensure antiviral therapeutics are available.
 - Review and prepare prewritten Order Sets for antiviral treatments.
 - Treatments approved for outpatients with mild to moderate COVID-19 illness include: Paxlovid, Molnupiravir, and Remdesivir)
 - COVID-19 treatments should begin as soon as possible, and no later than 5 days after diagnosis.
 - Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) is indicated for the treatment and prophylaxis of Influenza. For greatest benefit, [Tamiflu](#) should be started within 48 hours of symptom onset.
 4. **Safe Visitation.** Implement screening testing for visitors prior to entry.
 - Rapid COVID-19 testing of all visitors reduces risk of outbreaks. Free tests are in ample supply. Fill out this [form](#) to request test kits.
 - Ensure safe visitation practices as described in [AFL 22-01](#).
 - Healthcare providers should educate patients about risks of indoor gatherings and personal protective behaviors to mitigate risk (e.g., testing, masking, and gathering outdoors).
 5. **Enhanced screening** and post exposure testing. MCPH recommends utilizing rapid antigen tests for COVID-19 to screen staff or residents who may have been exposed in community and family settings or after travel.
 - Test staff on day 3 and day 5 if community exposure is suspected or after attending community events or travel.
 - Test residents at 24-36 hours, and on day 3 and day 5 following outings over 24 hours, and following travel or home visits, or whenever exposure outside the facility is suspected.

Resources:

[COVID-19 Treatment Information for Providers and Facilities](#)

[COVID-19 Treatment Communications Tool Kit](#)

[CDC Infection Control and Prevention Guidance for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[CDC Guidance - Influenza in Long-Term Care Settings](#)

[Testing and Management Considerations for Nursing Home Residents with Acute Respiratory Illness Symptoms when SARS-CoV-2 and Influenza Viruses are Co-circulating](#)