



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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



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PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

March 6, 2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Colleagues:

Current Situation

Marin County Public Health is investigating return travelers who developed symptoms consistent with COVID-19 after travel on the Grand Princess – Mexican Riviera cruise during February 10-21. This cruise has been identified as a potential source of COVID-19 exposure, and two of these travelers have been hospitalized and tested for COVID-19 in Marin County. New cases of COVID-19 in the Bay Area are evidence of community transmission but the extent of local transmission is still unknown. As of today, no Marin County residents have tested positive for COVID-19.

On March 4, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated clinical criteria for patients under investigation (PUI). Marin County Public Health has expanded COVID-19 testing based on these new criteria. Currently, regional testing capacity remains limited. Notably, Quest and LabCorp have announced COVID-19 testing capacity, starting next week. Clinicians considering testing should review cases with Marin County Public Health (see below) to ensure tracking and follow-up for potential positive results, regardless of where testing occurs.

Marin County Public Health is prioritizing COVID-19 testing for the following patients:

1. Symptomatic patients (includes health care workers) who have had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient or a history of travel from affected geographic areas, within 14 days of symptom onset.
2. Patients with fever (subjective or confirmed) with severe acute lower respiratory illness requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza).

Actions requested of providers

1. Health care providers should contact Marin County Public Health immediately by phone (415 473 4163; after hours - 415 499 7237) to determine if a patient should be tested for COVID-2019.
2. Participate in weekly Marin County Public Health COVID-19 conference calls, starting Tuesday March 10, 2020, to receive timely and accurate updates. To join the meeting, call 669 900 6833 and enter meeting ID 415 473 6871#. When asked for user ID, press #.
3. Email: HPPCoordinator@marincounty.org to be added to distribution list.

Call Schedule:

- Hospital Conference Call: 9:00 - 9:30 AM
- Outpatient Clinics: 9:30 - 10:00 AM
- Other Healthcare Facilities¹ 10:00 – 10:30 AM

¹ SNFs, Surgery Centers, Dialysis, Behavioral Health, etc.

4. Health care providers should review and implement [infection prevention and control guidance](#) specific to COVID-19 (2/21/2020).
5. Prepare for the possible arrival of patients with COVID-19 into your facility by reviewing and implementing CDC-recommended infection control recommendations [Healthcare Professional Preparedness Checklist For Transport and Arrival of Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19](#).
 - a. Immediately place a surgical mask on patients being evaluated for fever and/or respiratory symptoms; promptly place patients in private rooms; and have healthcare personnel wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - b. Obtain a travel history, including travel on the Grand Princess Mexican Riviera cruise (February 10-21, 2020).
 - i. Review [COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#) to determine if your patient has travelled to a geographic area of concern.
6. Reinforce basic infection control measures, including handwashing, proper cough hygiene, social distancing when sick, and avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
7. Prescribe influenza vaccination.
8. Encourage patients to prepare for possible outbreak by ensuring they have an adequate supply of essential medicines; preparing a child care plan in the event childcare is not available (including school closures); and staying up-to-date with [trusted resources](#) (e.g., CDC).
9. Patients seeking guidance regarding travel plans should be made aware of the possibility of new travel restrictions and risk should they travel abroad and should be guided to the CDC website for the latest travel advisories.
10. Report suspect COVID-19 cases to Marin County Public Health by phone (415-473-4163; after hours call 415-499-7237).

Thank you for your partnership in this rapidly evolving situation.

Sincerely,

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Additional Information

World Health Organization (WHO). <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

California Department of Public Health (CDPH). <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

Marin Health and Human Services
<https://www.marinhhs.org/coronavirus-health-care-providers>