

March 20, 2020

HEALTH ALERT: COVID-19

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, testing is an integral part of identifying and limiting the spread of COVID-19 within our community. Several options for testing are currently available:

- (1) The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) continues to test for COVID-19 and has developed a set of criteria for specimen collection and testing. These criteria are based on testing the specimens of greatest public health significance, and are outlined in the attached letter from MDHHS. To test for COVID-19 clinicians need to call the MDHHS central 24-hour testing referral telephone line at 888-277-9894. They will be given a PUI number and instructed to fax the completed PUI form to the Local Health Department. The Ottawa County Department of Public Health fax number is 616-393-5767.
- (2) Commercial testing is also available through Quest Laboratory, Labcorp and ARUP.
- (3) Additionally, patients can initiate the COVID-19 testing process by calling for a screening interview at one of the sample collection sites listed below:

**HOLLAND HOSPITAL**

COVID-19 Screening Hotline: 616-394-2080  
(Available: 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, 7 days a week)

**SPECTRUM HEALTH**

COVID-19 Screening Hotline: 616-391-2380  
(Available: 24 hours/day, 7 days a week)

**NORTH OTTAWA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

COVID-19 Screening Hotline: 616-935-7810  
(Available: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM , Monday thru Friday)

The Ottawa County Department of Public Health (OCDPH) is available for questions regarding testing and other COVID-19 related issues at 616-396-5266, 8AM - 5PM, Monday thru Friday. After hours you may reach OCDPH by calling Central Dispatch at 616-994-7850 or 800-249-0911 and a representative from OCDPH will be notified. If you need immediate assistance and do not have these numbers at your disposal simply dial "911".

It goes without saying that we greatly appreciate your cooperation and patience in these difficult times. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you in the days ahead.

Sincerely,



Paul A. Heidel, MD, MPH  
Medical Director  
Ottawa County Department of Public Health



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON  
DIRECTOR

## MEMORANDUM

Date: March 18, 2020

To: Health Care Providers

From: Joneigh Khaldun, MD, MPH, FACEP  
Chief Medical Executive and Chief Deputy for Health  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

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Thank you for continued support in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter is intended to provide guidance about collection and testing of specimens for COVID-19 in Michigan, including public health coordination of specimen testing in laboratories. With evidence of community spread in Michigan and across the country, it is essential public health and healthcare partner to prioritize specimen collection and testing for those at highest risk of impacting the public's health and health care systems.

Due to shortage of collection kits, sample media and laboratory capacity, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has worked with local public health and hospitals to created prioritization criteria for use of this valuable resource. It is essential to collect and test specimens of greatest public health significance to drive and inform infection prevention and control and community mitigation. Current criteria\* include:

1. Individuals presenting with signs/symptoms of COVID-19 infection who are identified as a known contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 Infection and are not members of the same household or congregate living situation as the confirmed case (unless as part of a public health investigation).
2. Individuals who become symptomatic while being in a 14-day monitoring and quarantine period (such as, but not limited to, monitoring due to travel from a region with widespread transmission).
3. Symptomatic individuals who are part of a public health investigation of a cluster of illness associated with a vulnerable population (e.g., long term care facility).
4. Symptomatic individuals who may be more likely to infect many of people or a vulnerable population (e.g., healthcare providers and those living in congregate settings like dorms, camps, long term care facilities).
5. Individuals presenting with severe illness requiring hospitalization and having no other identified etiology.

\* This will be adjusted as the COVID-19 epidemic evolves and information needs change.

In recognition of the challenges experienced in testing for COVID-19, the MDHHS has developed the Michigan COVID-19 Laboratory Emergency Response Network (MI-CLERN). The purpose is to optimize statewide testing of COVID samples to support the local, state, and federal public health and healthcare response. MI-CLERN represents a collaboration of the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories, Michigan's hospitals, and the private laboratory sector supported by local and state public health with full alignment with evolving federal testing initiative. Key features of MI-CLERN include:

- Statewide uniform, dynamic, epidemiologically driven prioritization of testing
- Expansion of state, hospital, and community-based laboratory testing
  - Streamline of approval for hospital laboratories via MDHHS BOL
  - Regional coordination to optimize epidemiologically valuable testing
- Central 24-hour testing referral telephone line exclusively for Michigan clinicians
- Rapid delivery of test results through Michigan Disease Surveillance System, coordinating with evolving federal system
- Full integration with evolving federal COVID-19 Public Health and Community Testing efforts

The central 24-hour testing referral telephone line (888-277-9894) will go live 08:00 on Thursday 3/19/2020. Clinicians should call this number to have the patient's symptoms and risk factors assessed against the prioritization criteria. If the patient meets criteria, MDHHS will provide instructions for obtaining laboratory testing.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now allows for collection of a single Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab for testing. Local health departments do not currently have the capacity to collect samples from patients.
- Due to the shortage of viral transport media, it is permissible to aseptically divide 3 mL of media into three 1 mL containers.
- As Dacron swabs essential for collection are in short supply, we are asking all healthcare providers to immediately suspend sampling efforts the except for patients determined to meet high priority criteria
- The completed Patient Under Investigation (PUI) form ([https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/MDHHS\\_CDC\\_PUI\\_Form\\_and\\_Cover\\_Sheet\\_Filable\\_v02.03.2020\\_680230\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/MDHHS_CDC_PUI_Form_and_Cover_Sheet_Filable_v02.03.2020_680230_7.pdf)) should be faxed to your local health department (see attached list).
- The MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) will only test specimens for COVID-19 that have a PUI number on the requisition form.

Limiting the impact of COVID-19 on the health and well-being of Michiganders requires collaboration and resources in all sectors. We need our entire healthcare system to pull together to create a unity of effort that will ultimately benefit our healthcare system, and most importantly our citizens. For the latest information on Michigan's response to COVID-19, please visit [www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus). You may also email our Community Health Emergency Coordination Center at: [checcdeptcoor@michigan.gov](mailto:checcdeptcoor@michigan.gov).