



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants
Date: June 12, 2020
From: San Diego County Health and Human Service Agency

Health Advisory Update #16: Coronavirus Disease 2020 (COVID-19) - Test, Trace, and Treat (T3) Strategy

Key Messages

- On April 28, 2020, the County of San Diego's Health & Human Services Agency launched a Test, Trace, and Treat (T3) Strategy, which relies on the healthcare provider community, first responders and other stakeholders, in addition to public health and human services efforts, to be effective in mitigating coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
 - **Test:** As diagnostic (molecular) testing capacity increases, hospitals, community clinics, pharmacies, and other health care providers should maximize testing as much as possible for each organization.
 - Individuals should consult with their physician or medical provider regarding getting tested for COVID-19.
 - Health plans must cover COVID-19 tests that are FDA approved or authorized, or approved by the state, without prior authorization and at no cost to the enrollee. This includes follow-up (serial/sequential) tests and testing for asymptomatic individuals. Additional guidance is provided by the [Department of Managed Health Care](#).
 - When testing is not available, patients can be referred to 2-1-1 San Diego as per guidance below.
 - As part of clinical management for patients who test positive, providers should notify patients that they will be contacted by the County Epidemiology Unit and share as applicable the Health Officer Order for Isolation and Isolation Instructions or the Health Officer Order for Quarantine and Quarantine Guidance. These documents are all found [here](#) and further guidance is provided in [CAHAN #11](#).
 - Of note, [pharmacies](#) are now permitted to obtain test specimens.
 - Providers and laboratories should follow [local reporting guidance](#) for covid-19 cases, deaths, and Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) cases. In addition, laboratories need to follow recent [federal reporting requirements](#) including demographic and other data.
 - **Trace:** Contact Tracing capacity is being significantly increased with cultural competence in mind.
 - **Treat:** Treatment includes:
 - Psycho-social support with monitoring (twice daily temperatures) for disease progression with recommendation for early medical evaluations for respiratory, cardiac, or embolic complications, if needed.
 - For isolation, the County has set up Public Health hotel rooms for temporary lodging, if needed, for those unable to safely isolate from family members.
 - Convalescent plasma with COVID-19 antibodies and Remdesivir are treatment options that may be available for hospitalized patients.
- The Actions Requested section below details methods for our healthcare community to synergize and support the regional T3 Strategy for increased economic, educational, and social activity, while minimizing COVID-19 spread, morbidity, and mortality.

Situation

- As the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic progresses, the County of San Diego (County) response continues to evolve. The latest epidemiological data on cases, hospitalizations, and deaths can be found [here](#).

- While many patients seen in healthcare settings are symptomatic, scientific reports suggest cases can also be asymptomatic.^{1,2,3}
- In order to effectively control dissemination of disease and associated morbidity and mortality, symptomatic and asymptomatic cases need to be quickly diagnosed and isolated, contacts identified and quarantined, and supportive treatment provided.
- The County launched a Test, Trace, and Treat (T3) Strategy on April 28, 2020 as a population health-based strategy using a collaborative effort to achieve collective impact in protecting the public against COVID-19.
- **The T3 Strategy, though initiated by the County of San Diego, relies on the healthcare provider community and other stakeholders to be maximally effective.**
 - **Test:** The current state required COVID-19 testing goal for San Diego County is to increase diagnostic (also known as molecular or Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing across the county to at least 4,950 tests per day through public and private testing via hospitals, clinics, and healthcare providers. This represents 1.5 tests per 1,000 population. Health plans must cover COVID-19 tests per [Department of Managed Health Care guidance](#). **While everyone is eligible to get tested, individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 infection or association with a high-risk group, such as those previously listed in the four testing priority groups (see CAHAN #13), should continue to be prioritized for testing.**
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 infection or association with a high-risk group are no longer necessary to be tested but remain a priority. The high-risk groups include:
 - Healthcare workers, first responders, other social service employees, and people in [essential jobs](#)
 - People 65 and older
 - People with chronic medical conditions
 - People living in a residential or group setting, such as a long-term care facility or shelter
 - People exposed to infected individuals in places where COVID-19 risk is high
 - The message to San Diegans who are interested in testing is to:
 - Contact their healthcare provider; or
 - Go online to 2-1-1 San Diego, <https://211sandiego.org/>, to schedule an appointment online; or
 - Call 2-1-1- to be directed to a location nearest you.
 - As antibody testing becomes more reliable and the science clearer on implications of positive antibody/serology results, antibody tests may offer greater utility in a later phase strategy. At this time, serological tests should be used primarily for prevalence studies, epidemiological investigations, and identification of plasma donors. See the California Testing Task Force Serology Testing Indications [here](#) and prior guidance ([CAHAN #14](#)).
 - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has created a testing overview document [here](#).
 - **Trace:** Contact tracing allows those who have been exposed to a person with lab confirmed COVID-19 disease to be identified and quarantined to prevent spread of the disease. To increase contact tracing capacity, contact tracers are being hired and trained to meet the state-required capacity goal of 450 tracers for our region. Additionally, community health outreach workers/promotoras are being hired to support contact tracing efforts. All close contacts to confirmed cases will be contacted and monitored for a period of 14 days.
 - **Treat:** Treatment includes psycho-social support, monitoring of symptoms (twice daily temperatures) and early referral to medical care for worsening respiratory, cardiac, or embolic complications. Hospitalization capacity exists in the county for those requiring admission, and early intervention is beneficial. For isolation, the County has identified Public Health hotels for temporary lodging, if needed, for those unable to safely isolate from family members. Medical providers can refer patients to the Temporary Lodging Hotline by calling 211 from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., 7 days a week. Additional hospital therapies under approved investigational methods include:
 - FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of **Remdesivir**, which has shown some effectiveness. Limited doses of Remdesivir have been made available and doses have been proportionally distributed to county hospitals upon consultation with Chief Medical Officers and guidance from [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#), and approved by the County of San Diego Medical Operations Center.

¹ He, X. et al. [Temporal dynamics in viral shedding and transmissibility of COVID-19](#). *Nat Med* 26, 672–675 (2020).

² Ganyani, T. et al. [Estimating the generation interval for coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) based on symptom onset data](#), March 2020. *Eurosurveillance*, 25(17).

³ Lavezzo, E. et al. [Suppression of COVID-19 outbreak in the municipality of Vo, Italy](#). *MedRxiv* (2020).

- **Convalescent plasma donations** containing COVID-19 antibodies may provide passive immunity to those actively infected with the virus.
 - This has been studied and utilized for other serious infections.
 - The FDA recently produced a consumer video [here](#).
 - Locally, the [San Diego Blood Bank COVID-19 and Convalescent Plasma Donation effort](#) allows recovered patients to donate plasma.
- **The Actions Requested section below details how our healthcare community can synergize around and support the T3 Strategy for our region to effectively increase economic, educational, and social opportunities while minimizing spread and morbidity from COVID-19.**

Actions Requested

1. Test:

- **While everyone is eligible to get tested, individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 infection or association with a high-risk group, such as those previously listed in the four testing priority groups (see CAHAN #13), should continue to be prioritized for testing.**
- Health plans must cover COVID-19 tests that are FDA approved or authorized, or approved by the state, without prior authorization and at no cost to the enrollee. This includes follow-up (serial/sequential) tests and testing for asymptomatic individuals. Additional guidance is provided by the [Department of Managed Health Care](#).
- Healthcare facilities, centers, and providers should maximize testing for each organization.
 - Organizations should focus on testing all patients within the high-priority groups, including health care workers, first responders and other staff.
 - Where possible, healthcare facilities should consider partnerships with local congregate facilities such as skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, homeless shelters, and substance use disorder treatment facilities to allow for testing in settings where spread can occur.
 - The Governor and CDPH have [authorized pharmacies to collect test specimens](#) in addition to general guidance for pharmacies located [here](#). Facilities may also partner with pharmacies to allow for additional test collection sites while processing specimens in their laboratories.
 - Providers who cannot conduct testing may refer their patients to 2-1-1 San Diego detailed above.
- Providers should clinically manage patients who test positive and provide them with the following:
 - [Health Officer Order for Isolation](#) and [Home Isolation Instructions](#).
 - [Health Officer Order for Quarantine](#) and [Quarantine Instructions](#), if not an essential worker.
 - The Health Officer Orders and Home Isolation and Quarantine Instructions are available in English and eight other languages [here](#) (See prior [CAHAN #11](#) as well).
- Providers should also inform patients that the County of San Diego Public Health Department will be calling to obtain information to minimize further spread, including identification of close contacts.
- Providers and local laboratories should follow [local reporting guidelines](#) to report cases, deaths, and Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) cases. In addition, laboratories need to follow recent [federal reporting requirements](#) including demographic and other data.

2. Trace:

- Per above, providers are requested to notify patients of the Health Officer Order for Quarantine and Quarantine Instructions both found [here](#).
- Providers should also inform patients that a public health nurse or communicable disease investigator from the County Epidemiology Unit will be contacting them to investigate further, including identification of close contacts.
- County Epidemiology will make efforts to contact every identified close contact as soon as possible to request quarantine and to perform self-monitoring for a minimum of 14 days.
- **All close contacts who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more within six feet may be offered testing.**

- 3. **Treat:** Treatment includes psycho-social support, monitoring for disease progression, and medical therapies as provided by primary care and area hospitals. Early referral to hospital emergency departments for worsening COVID-19 infection symptoms, especially increased shortness of breath or possible indications of stroke, is encouraged.

Children may present with atypical symptoms of fever, abdominal pain, rash, swelling of hands, and feet indicative of a severe multi system inflammatory condition.

- Temporary Lodging
 - Those who cannot be isolated at home may be eligible for temporary lodging, if medically stable and functionally independent. Staff should call 211 from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 - Providers, their staff, and discharge planners are asked to ensure client is medically stable as temporary lodging is a hotel, not healthcare facility. Of note, some individuals referred for housing have needed re-hospitalization.
- Remdesivir has been distributed to local hospitals proportionally based on COVID-19 cases.
- Plasma Donation
 - Please advise those who have recovered and are at least 28 days from symptom onset (or testing date if asymptomatic) to consider donating plasma to the San Diego Blood Bank. Recovered patients can access the COVID-19 and Convalescent Plasma Donation FAQ page [here](#), which also links to the respective enrollment form if the patient chooses to proceed.

General public inquiries about COVID-19 should be directed to [2-1-1 San Diego](#) or to the [County of San Diego COVID-19 website](#).

Thank you for your participation.

CAHAN San Diego

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