

From: Hurston, Edwin
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 11:27 AM
To:
Cc:
Subject: Resident and Staff COVID-19 Testing

Mr.,

We are pleased to have received _____'s request for COVID-19 testing of your residents and staff. Your contact information will be passed to one of the two commercial laboratories that will conduct the testing. Those laboratories are Viracor/Eurofins Clinical Diagnostics and Clarity Laboratories. A representative of the lab will contact you to coordinate the date and time of the testing, as well as other logistical details for the specimen collection.

The intent of providing these one-time tests is to facilitate your development of a test-based COVID-19 prevention/mitigation strategy for your facility, as indicated in the attached Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) Advisory titled "Test-based Strategies for Preventing Transmission of the Virus that Causes COVID-19 in Skilled Nursing Facilities". As part of this planning and strategy development process, it is extremely important to include a staffing plan, should members of your team test positive.

The DOH advisory points out, among many other things:

- Universal testing of residents and staff is one strategy to help inform infection prevention and control in skilled nursing facilities.
- Consider four key principles when using testing in skilled nursing care facilities.
 - Testing should not supersede existing infection prevention and control (IPC) interventions.
 - Testing should be used when results will lead to specific IPC actions.
 - The first step of a test-based prevention strategy should ideally be a point prevalence survey (PPS) of all residents and all HCP in the facility.
 - Repeat testing may be warranted in certain circumstances.
- Facilities should develop a plan for testing and post-testing intervention to include:
 - Logistics of resident and staff testing
 - Cohorting plan to include designated Red, Yellow, and Green zones, respective of testing result and exposure status.

Your single county-funded testing will constitute your point prevalence survey in such an effort. It is important to recognize that any follow-up testing will require a different funding source.

This one-time point prevalence survey is intended as the starting point for the refinement of your infection prevention and control interventions. As you anticipate this review and refinement, you may want to consider a county-funded infection control review of your facility by Cocciardi and Associates, Inc. This service will include a review of infection control policies and practices with on-the-spot consultation services or training that will help you to create your test-based strategy for preventing transmission of the corona virus.

As noted above, and as I'm sure you have considered, testing may identify asymptomatic staff members who will need to self-quarantine for up to two weeks. Therefore, we highly encouraged you to develop a staffing plan that will allow you to function with a reduced staff, or identify replacement staff prior to testing, to cover the 14 days following reported test results. This planning step is crucial, as qualified personnel that you would want to backfill your facility are in high-demand and short-supply. At the county level, we are not positioned to support backfill requests, so prior planning will be an important step in your process of developing a COVID-19 prevention/mitigation strategy for your facility.

Should you have any questions concerning these testing and infection control review services, please "reply" to this message and I'll get back with you at the earliest opportunity.

Best regards,

Ed Hurston