Current Situation
There is currently 1 confirmed case of novel coronavirus in LA County who is a non-resident traveler from Wuhan, China. This person self-presented for evaluation immediately at the airport and is receiving appropriate care at a healthcare facility trained to handle this type of infection. Public Health is not releasing the facility location or patient’s current condition. No cases have been identified from contact with this patient. The risk of spread in LA County or within the U.S. as determined by the CDC still remains low. There is currently no evidence of person to person transmission in LA County.

There is no outbreak in the city of Carson, contrary to a fake letter that was circulated today. For every positive case, the Department of Public Health will notify the public through a press release.

It appears that supportive care is effective for the majority of patients. The illness appears to be severe mostly in persons who are older or have underlying medical conditions.

This is an evolving situation and we are learning more each day. We are hoping to receive more accurate information about the disease characteristics now that US experts are helping with the WHO team that is going to China. We do not have all the answers related to incubation period and transmission patterns. We anticipate that improved information will be available soon.

The CDC is considering revising the definition of patients under investigation (PUI), but no changes have been announced yet.

The federal government is reviewing information gathered from cases abroad and the six cases here. There is also an effort from HHS, $105 million to work on the development of a vaccine.

The Department of Public Health is working closely with CDC and CDPH to better understand this outbreak and how the novel coronavirus will continue to spread. We will keep you informed.

Please continue to promote influenza vaccination.
Influenza B started in early September and recently Influenza A H1N1 has become more prevalent. We expect that both of those viruses will continue to cause a lot of illness in the County during the next few months. We’re urging vaccination which will help to prevent flu and reduce confusion with novel coronavirus infection symptoms.

We continue to recommend that LA residents, students, workers, and visitors regularly practice good personal hygiene. People taking personal protective measures to prevent the spread of influenza and other circulating infections is one of our best practices. If someone is ill, sneezing, or coughing, they should stay home. Wash hands regularly. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue if you cough or sneeze.

Information and Resources
The DPH Novel Coronavirus Website includes guidance for the public, schools, as well as healthcare providers and information in multiple languages. Please share information with parents, colleagues, and staff. You can click on the coronavirus banner on our homepage to access all the information http://publichealth.lacounty.gov.

The Los Angeles Health Alert Network (LAHAN) informs clinicians of local outbreaks and emerging health risks, including 2019-nCoV. To sign up, visit: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/laahan or text LAHAN to 66866.
For general information about novel coronavirus call 211.

The current situation is confusing to people. Some people are promoting inaccurate information and we request your assistance in addressing this. In times like these, with so much uncertainty, people look to their health care provider as a source of accurate information. Providing accurate information helps to build public trust and relieves anxiety in our community.

Contact tracing
When a person has a positive test for the novel coronavirus, Public Health adheres to a specific protocol. We confirm the diagnosis and isolate cases. We quickly identify contacts (a close contact is someone who is within 6 ft of an infected person for more than 10 minutes) and monitor them closely for up to 14 days (the maximum incubation period based on currently available information). If contacts remain well after 14 days, they are considered to be free of the risk of the disease. This information is evolving but we work with airlines, other jurisdictions, and other organizations to assemble accurate lists of contacts and evaluate and test them as needed.

PUI testing and evaluation
Public Health has created a Novel Coronavirus Provider Checklist that provides step-by-step guidance for providers to follow when evaluating patients for possible 2019-nCoV infection. This is available from our coronavirus webpage. If you identify someone who meets the current PUI criteria, call your local health department immediately. Do not send the patient anywhere until you have discussed the case with Public Health. LAC DPH will authorize and coordinate testing at the CDC, if indicated. We will also discuss and assist with the disposition of the PUI pending test results on a case by case basis considering risk and factors such as where the PUI lives and their travel plans.

For LA County, the number to call if you have a suspect case is the Acute Communicable Disease Control (ACDC) program at 213-240-7941, or after hours the county operator, 213-974-1234 - tell them you want to speak with the doctor on call about coronavirus. These numbers are intended for health care providers so please don’t share them with others. The general public is advised to call 211. Numbers for Long Beach and Pasadena Health Departments are included in our health alerts posted on the Los Angeles Health Alert Network website (www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/lan).

Reporting
PUI should be reported to the local health department who will work through the case and report to the State.

Traveling and ports of entry
The CDC has expanded screening to 20 points of entry in the US and is providing information cards to everyone arriving from China. The cards give instructions on what the person should do if they develop fever, cough, shortness of breath. If someone who is ill comes to your facility with one of those cards, consider them as a potential PUI for coronavirus infection and contact your local health department.

Preventing transmission in health care facilities
As with other coronaviruses, it is likely that novel coronavirus transmission can occur through the mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eye. For infection control in healthcare facilities we recommend CDC’s guidance which is applicable to all healthcare settings. These recommendations in adherence to standard, contact and airborne precautions (use of gown, gloves, N95 mask and eye protection).

We recommend that everyone review the CDC interim infection prevention and control recommendations for PUIs with novel coronavirus. People with symptoms are advised to call their healthcare provider ahead of time, so the provider can prepare for the individual’s arrival, as needed. If a PUI presents themselves to an office and the clinic does not have all recommended PPE, hand the patient a mask, place them in a room, close the door and contact Public Health for additional guidance and information.

Public Health advises against facility practices that request that all patients coming into the waiting room wear a mask during registration. Do a quick triage to find out what is the person coming in for, what information have they given you, and determine if it warrants a mask. Patients with respiratory symptoms should be asked about recent travel history,
especially whether they have visited Wuhan, China in the preceding 14 days. Concern about 2019-nCov provides a good opportunity to assess your usual infection control approach to respiratory and influenza season. The best practices, regardless of the viruses circulating, is to identify people with respiratory symptoms, offer them a mask and hand hygiene, and place them in an individual room.

**Preventing transmission in general settings**
For the general public, there is no recommendation to use masks or N95s, including among persons or employees returning from China. The situation in the US is very different from the current situation in China. We realize that some members of the public are choosing to wear masks, but available evidence does not support that masks are effective at preventing the wearer from infection. Public Health also discourages any organization from institutionalizing the practice of wearing masks.

We know that many people fly into LAX every day from various places in the world, including China. Based on what we know, we become concerned when an individual becomes sick and they have recently been in a location where novel coronavirus is known to be present. For persons with respiratory symptoms, they should be isolated and asked about recent travel to Hubei province (or other places designated by CDC). Persons who are not ill pose no risk to the rest of us.

Dr. Fauci, the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), reminded us this week that in the past, respiratory illness outbreaks have been driven by sick people, not by asymptomatic transmission. Therefore, the primary focus needs to be on those who are ill (febrile and coughing). As with influenza, if someone is ill, sneezing, or coughing, they should stay home from work or school. Public health recommends that everyone discuss stay-at-home-when-ill policies with their supervisors and co-workers. This is a time when we should make the strongest possible efforts to comply with policies that keep everyone safe and allow sick employees to remain at home.

**Preparedness**
We have strong confidence in the procedures and recommendations that in place to keep communities safe. We appreciate the work you do to assess patients, report to us, and adhere to recommended infection control practices. We recommend that all healthcare facilities review their surge plans and update them as needed to be prepared in the event that the situation changes.

Thank you to everyone who participated on the call, we appreciate your reaching out to us for information. We apologize to those who were unable to join due to the high call volume.

We want to recognize and thank you for the work that you and your agencies perform in managing the care of our patients and providing accurate information to all who are concerned.