



LAC DPH Health Advisory:
Increasing COVID-19 Cases; Isolation and
Quarantine; Testing Access



July 4, 2020

*This message is intended for all healthcare providers in Los Angeles County.
Please distribute as appropriate.*

Key Messages

- LA County is experiencing a concerning increase in community COVID-19 cases and the number of new patients requiring hospitalization has increased substantially. LAC DPH is concerned that acute care hospitals will need to begin implementing decompression plans and prepare for another wave of cases. See *Situation* below.
- When clinicians diagnose ambulatory patients with COVID-19 it is important that they provide patients with [Health Officer Home Isolation Orders](#) (updated 7.1.20) and [instructions](#) to self-isolate immediately. In the absence of a more likely diagnosis, patients with symptoms of an acute febrile respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath) should be presumed to have COVID-19 and provided Isolation Orders. Clinicians should use their clinical judgement to determine if patients presenting with other [signs or symptoms](#) are likely to have COVID-19 and should be isolated.

LAC DPH has created a new Isolation and Quarantine [webpage](#) for healthcare providers which include guidelines on the public health management of cases and contacts and resources on topics such as duration of isolation and quarantine, returning to work, testing of close contacts, and management of patients with a history of recovery from laboratory-confirmed COVID-19.

- Healthcare providers should be able to provide their patients with timely access to SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic testing [when indicated](#). A [Reference Guide to Laboratories Providing COVID-19 PCR Molecular Testing](#) is now available to help healthcare organizations and other entities identify a laboratory provider that best fits their needs.

Situation

Los Angeles County data shows a steep increase in community spread of COVID-19. The daily number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients has risen recently and the LA County Department of Health Services (LAC DHS) is projecting a marked increase in the coming weeks. If the trajectory continues, the number of ICU beds—our most limited resource—is likely to become inadequate in the near future. The number of hospital beds are projected to become inadequate in the next 2-3 weeks, see [Projections of Hospital-based Healthcare Demand due to COVID-19 in Los Angeles County](#) June 29, 2020. Acute care hospitals were asked on 6.26.20 to review their decompression plans and prepare for another wave of hospitalizations.

View LA County COVID-19 data available [here](#) including city/community case summaries, an interactive COVID-19 dashboard, healthcare worker cases, and COVID Watch.

Updates

Laboratory Tests

- The FDA [recommends](#) that certain COVID-19 serology tests should not be used by clinical laboratories and health care providers. The tests that providers and labs should stop using is on the FDA's "[removed](#)" test list.
- **Considerations for Implementation of SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Testing [guidance](#)** was published by the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) on 6.23.20. APHL states that the antigen tests are considerably less sensitive than molecular tests and false negatives are common. In addition, APHL warns of false positive antigen tests, particularly in low prevalence populations.

New Patient Resources

- **How Does Contact Tracing Work?** [Flyer](#) that explains to cases and contacts what to expect.
- **Infographic on reducing the risk of COVID-19 outside the home.** Encourages the public to reduce the risks from the three C's (Confined spaces, Crowds, and Close contact). *View [Prevention Materials](#).*

Visit the LAC DPH COVID-19 Provider [website](#) for up-to-date resources and guidance,

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