Montana Hospital Association - Situation Report
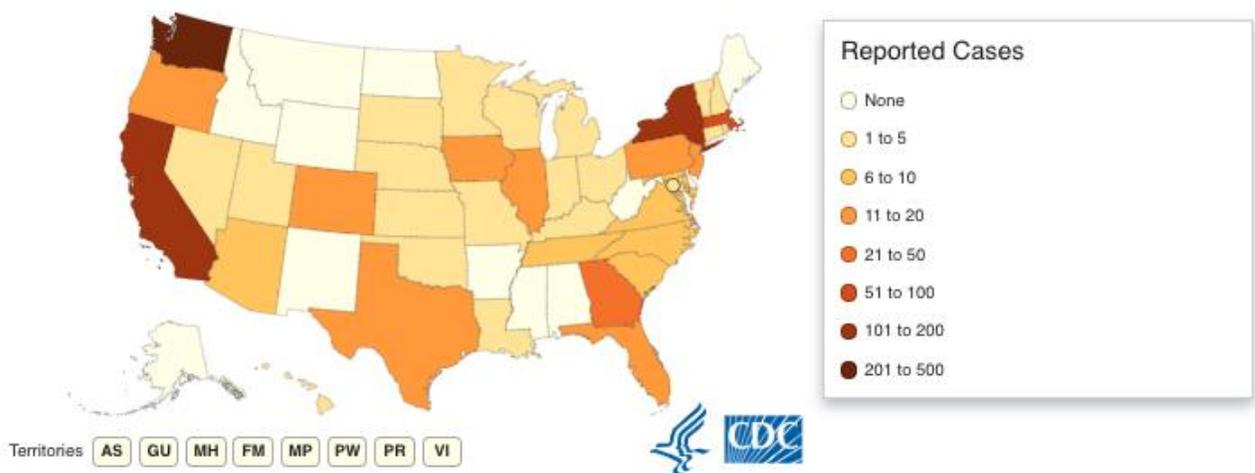
March 11, 2020

COVID-19

REPORTED CASES	
Montana	**0**
United States	938
WA	267
ID	0
WY	0
ND	0
SD	1 to 5

States Reporting Cases of COVID-19 to CDC*

Reported Cases

- None
- 1 to 5
- 6 to 10
- 11 to 20
- 21 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 200
- 201 to 500

Territories: AS GU MH FM MP PW PR VI

OPERATIONS

Revised CDC Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations: On March 10, CDC revised [IP/IC recommendations for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in healthcare settings.](#) Summary of changes include updated PPE guidance and designating COVID-19 units with dedicated personnel. CMS released additional infection control guidance for [hospice providers](#) and [nursing homes](#) on March 9. At this time, these recommendations will be considered by CMS surveyors to determine if Medicare and Medicaid providers are complying with infection control protocols.

Montana EMS Guidance Issued Today: [Patient care, PPE and surface cleaning guidance from Montana DPHHS.](#)

EMTALA Requirements: CMS provided [guidance on EMTALA implications in dealing with COVID-19](#). CMS restates past guidance on alternative care sites and the EMTALA waiver process and provides new information specific to screening and transfers of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients.

PLANNING

MHA and the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) team continue to provide planning support for healthcare providers. Joint planning is underway with Montana DPHHS. Hospitals are asked to enter bed availability and resource needs into the Juvare system. Please complete all daily updates by 10:00 AM each morning.

LOGISTICS

PPE: Most manufacturers are now on allocation for items including masks, gowns and gloves. Currently, there are few if any remaining channels for providers to acquire additional PPE. Emergency stockpiles, when released, are limited and unlikely to cover all needs. Providers must take serious and severe steps to reduce need, control access and optimize use.

Employee Health: The CDC has again updated its [guidance on exposed workers](#). It is more restrictive and challenging for hospitals, requiring them to exhaust staffing options before allowing asymptomatic personnel to return to work.

Staffing: We are coordinating with DPHHS on the imminent rollout of MHMAS (Montana Healthcare Mutual Aid System) on the new volunteer platform, CORES. CORES is part of the Juvare system, and can be used to facilitate mutual aid for

Montana hospitals experiencing staffing shortages during disasters and emergencies.

Testing: The Montana Public Health Laboratory now has the capability to test for COVID-19 but the number of tests available is limited. In the coming weeks, clinicians will also be able to access COVID-19 testing through clinical laboratories performing tests authorized by FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The following laboratories will be offering COVID-19 testing for patients who meet current CDC guidance for evaluation of infection with COVID-19.

- LabCorp: available 3/5/2020
- Quest: available 3/9/2020
- Mayo: available 3/20/2020 *(anticipated)*
- Clinicians should follow CDC guidelines to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested. **Even when utilizing a clinical lab, healthcare providers should immediately notify their local health department in the event of a person under investigation for COVID-19 [per Montana Administrative Rules 37.114.203 (2)]**

FINANCE
New billing codes for COVID-19 were released by CMS last week, including guidance for Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP, and Individual and Small Group Market Insurance Coverage. Four major Montana insurers—BCBSMT, Pacific Source, Montana Health Co-op and Allegiance—have waived fees associated with COVID-19 testing. This does not yet include self-insured plans, including those administered by these insurers.

COMMUNICATIONS
MHA's Incident Management Team stands ready to connect you to the resources and information needed for your facility to respond and care for patients. Send an email to esf8@mtha.org.

REFERENCE LINKS
Contact Information: Local & Tribal County Health Departments

Rev. March 4: Criteria for Evaluation of Persons Under Investigation

Rev. March 7: Clinical guidance for management of patients with confirmed COVID-19

[State of Montana DPHHS COVID-19 Information](#)

[Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information](#)

[Healthcare Professionals Preparedness Checklist](#)

[Hospital Preparedness Tool](#)

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