September 17, 2020

COVID-19

REPORTED CASES	
Montana ***New in last 24hrs: 217 (+more than 2%)*** ***Active Cases: 2,103 (-1)*** ***Recovered: 7,401 (+215)*** ***Hospitalizations, Total: 549 (+6)*** ***Hospitalizations, Active: 107 (+1)*** ***Deaths: 143 (Last 24hrs: +2)*** Source: Montana COVID-19 Dashboard (Updated 10:00 a.m.)	**9,647**
United States ***New in last 24hrs: 43,745 (+less than 1%)*** Source: Johns Hopkins CSSE Global Outbreak Dashboard	**6,644,311**
WA	**80,812**
ID	**36,093**
WY	**4,566**
ND	**16,333**
SD	**17,291**

OPERATIONS

HHS unveils COVID-19 vaccine distribution strategy. HHS has released its strategy for the public distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine. HHS said that it developed the strategy in coordination with the Department of Defense and the CDC. It provides a strategic distribution overview along with an interim playbook for state, tribal, territorial and local public health programs and their partners on how to plan and operationalize COVID-19 vaccination response within respective jurisdictions.

Subcommittee examines administration's COVID-19 Response; testing capacity, COVID-19 vaccine distribution and COVID-19 funds discussed. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education

and Related Agencies convened a [hearing](#) to examine the Trump Administration's COVID-19 response efforts. Top officials from HHS testified about efforts to increase testing capacity and the development of a COVID-19 vaccine. CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield also testified about the agency's efforts to support states in conducting tests and preparing to distribute routine and COVID-19 vaccines.

Independent commission outlines 27 recommendations for nursing home COVID-19 response. An independent commission convened by CMS [released](#) its findings and [recommendations](#) on ensuring safety and quality in nursing homes during the COVID-19 response. Facilitated by [MITRE](#), CMS outlined four objectives for the Commission's investigation:

- Identify best practices for facilities to enable rapid and effective identification of COVID-19 in nursing homes;
- Recommend best practices as exemplars of rigorous infection control practices and facility resiliency to serve as a framework for enhanced oversight;
- Identify best practices for improved care delivery and responsiveness to resident needs before, during, and after an emergency; and
- Leverage new data sources to improve upon existing infection control policies.

See analysis of the recommendations [here](#).

FDA releases performance data for COVID-19 molecular diagnostic tests. The FDA has [released](#) comparative performance data for 55 COVID-19 molecular diagnostic tests. FDA plans to update the data as it receives additional results to help inform laboratories, health care providers and patients about the relative performance of available tests.

Seven contracts awarded to develop digital health technologies for COVID-19. The NIH [awarded](#) seven contracts to companies and academic institutions to develop digital health solutions, such as smartphone apps, wearable devices, and software, that can help address the COVID-19 pandemic. These seven projects were selected from over 200 ideas and represent a broad range of solutions for immediate public health needs related to pandemic and focus on solutions for medically underserved communities.

NIH awards $12M for COVID-19 community engagement research in disproportionately affected communities. NIH [awarded](#) $12 million to RTI International for outreach and engagement efforts in ethnic and racial minority communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. RTI

International will support teams in 11 states as part of the NIH Community Engagement Alliance ([CEAL](#)) Against COVID-19 Disparities. The goal of the CEAL teams will be to improve COVID-19 awareness and education research, with a focus on African American, Hispanics and Latinos, and American Indians. The CEAL teams will also facilitate participation of these groups in vaccine and therapeutic clinical trials.

PLANNING

New HHS data reporting platform - Single data entry fulfills state and federal requirements. MHA has purchased a new HHS Data Reporting Platform with COVID-19 grant funding. This creates a single, secure data entry point to fulfill both state and federal requirements, including state PPE resource allocation and HHS Teletracking mandates. This new single-entry system is especially critical with CMS' new rules that require such reporting as a Condition of Participation for Medicare and Medicaid. Hospitals will face possible termination of Medicare and Medicaid payments if unable to correct reporting deficiencies. See the complete details on the new platform [here](#).

As of September 8, 2020 hospitals should utilize EMResource for statewide bed availability, PPE and Remdisivir data, as well as, all TeleTracking data points, including HHS lab testing. Upon entering HHS data into EMResource, Juvare will automatically upload data to TeleTracking on behalf of your facility daily. Facilities may continue entering their own data into TeleTracking if they choose. All laboratories conducting COVID-19 testing and reporting patient-specific results – including hospital labs, nursing homes, and other facilities conducting testing for COVID-19 – will be required to comply. If a laboratory does not report the required information, CMS will impose a civil monetary penalty in the amount of $1,000 a day for the first day, and $500 for each subsequent day.

Long-Term Care facilities must transition all PPE and bed reporting to EMResources as of October 1, 2020. The previous [weekly survey](#) hosted on Formstack will become inactive on October 1, 2020. Facilities that do not have access to EMResource should email contact information to hppcoordinators@mtha.org.

For questions, please contact your [Regional Coordinator](#).

LOGISTICS

Submit PPE needs to DES coordinator in order to ensure allocation. Until further notice, healthcare organizations MUST [submit needs to their local DES coordinator](#) in order to receive an allocation of emergency PPE.

COMMUNICATIONS

Call recordings and webinar playbacks. Missed a call or webinar promoted in MHA's daily COVID-19 Call & Webinar Alert? Many are recorded, and are [posted here](#) once available.

COVID-19 Resource Library. MHA has built a [library](#) of helpful resources and sample material from other hospitals, healthcare organizations and states in their response to COVID-19.

HHS hospital-specific COVID-19 questions: HospitalCOVID19@hhs.gov

SITREP Archive. Daily Situation Reports archived [here](#).

State of Montana COVID-19 Hotline: 1-888-333-0461
Montanans can also email questions to covid19info@mt.gov. State public health officials will be responding to inquiries from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

MHA Incident Management Team: esf8@mtha.org

REFERENCE LINKS
GENERAL

Contact lists and general sources of information on a wide range of COVID-19-related issues

[MHA COVID-19 General Resources page](#)

CLINICAL OPERATIONS

Resources on infection prevention and control, EMS operations, telehealth operations and care for specific populations from federal and state resources

[MHA COVID-19 Clinical Operations page](#)

LONG-TERM CARE & RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

CDC and CMS resources specific to maintaining safe conditions in long-term care and retirement communities
[MHA COVID-19 Long-Term Care & Retirement Communities page](#)

SUPPLY CHAIN RESOURCES

Resources from AHRMM, AHA, Intalere, CDC and other sources on sourcing, conserving and properly using PPE

[MHA COVID-19 Supply Chain Resources page](#)

WORKFORCE PROTECTION & SUPPORT

MT DLI, CDC, OSHA and NIH toolkits, FAQs and other resources to protect employees and allow staff to return to work

[MHA COVID-19 Workforce Protection & Support page](#)

COMMUNITY MITIGATION STRATEGIES

CDC resources on community mitigation strategies

[MHA COVID-19 Community Mitigation Strategies page](#)

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Guidance, fact sheets and other resources on regulatory waivers and flexibilities in addition to catalogued financing information related to the CARES Act and other COVID-19 funding assistance

[MHA COVID-19 Finance & Administration page](#)

COMMUNICATIONS

Archive of MHA COVID-19 related communications as well as sample communications documents, toolkits and other resources from state and national levels

[MHA COVID-19 Communications page](#)

TESTING

FAQs, recommendations and other CDC, FDA and MT DPHHS resources related to COVID-19 testing

[MHA COVID-19 Testing page](#)

PLANNING

Best practices and planning documents from CDC, facilities on the front lines and MT DPHHS

[MHA COVID-19 Planning page](#)

###