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**Moab Regional Hospital (MRH) and Southeast Utah Health Department (SEUHD)
Joint Statement on COVID-19 Testing Strategy Among
Community Members and Moab-Area Visitors**

INTRODUCTION: At a local as well as a State and regional level, the past several weeks have demonstrated our ability to significantly reduce transmission rates of COVID-19 through widespread and large scale reduction in physical interaction. However, these actions have resulted in economic deceleration and unemployment at unprecedented levels that also may result in significant risk to public health and community well-being.

As we begin decision making that will lead to an increase in economic activity and visitation to Moab, we refocus our efforts to contain COVID-19 disease transmission through:

- *Widespread Testing;*
- *Contact Tracing;* and
- *Supported Isolation* of positive individuals (TTSI).

Continued attention to mitigation of disease spread through these activities will gradually replace the alternative strategy of wholesale social distancing and community-wide shelter-in-place.

GOAL: In order to enable our community to transition towards a gradual increase in visitation and economic activity while retaining our ability to respond to and contain COVID-19 disease transmission, we must achieve widespread testing of all symptomatic persons and asymptomatic screening among individuals at high risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Our ability to effectively manage this transition is contingent on our realization of widespread testing in order to accomplish:

- Early Identification of positive cases among symptomatic community members and visitors
- Identification of asymptomatic transmission among essential workers at higher risk of exposure
- Identification and reduction of transmission through contact tracing and testing among all contacts of positive cases

STRATEGY: In order to accomplish these goals Moab Regional Hospital and the Southeast Utah Health Department recommend the following strategic testing program to include testing of symptomatic persons as well as screening for individuals in high-risk settings.

I. Early Diagnostic Testing for Individuals with Symptoms of COVID-19.

- A. We encourage all Moab-area residents and visitors to call the MRH Coronavirus Hotline at 435-719-3998 to report any symptoms of COVID-19 including: Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, chest pressure, headache, gastrointestinal distress (vomiting, diarrhea), sore throat, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, or sneezing and allergy symptoms.
- B. Individuals with even one mild symptom are encouraged to be tested at the MRH Respiratory Evaluation Tent after calling the hotline.
- C. We stress the importance to all community members and visitors of reporting and seeking testing for even mild symptoms:
 - 1. By getting tested, even if an individual does not themselves require medical attention, they are helping to protect their family, friends, co-workers, and the broader community by helping reduce further transmission.
 - 2. Testing for COVID-19 is covered at 100% by insurance programs; additionally, available federal funding allows MRH to provide testing to uninsured individuals at no cost.
 - 3. Results of COVID-19 testing are subject to HIPAA and are not disclosed without patient consent, other than to the SEUHD for purposes of disease surveillance and prevention.
 - 4. Our healthcare system's successful response to this on-going threat will depend on the community's participation through reporting symptoms and seeking appropriate testing.

II. Asymptomatic Screening for Individuals in High-Risk Settings.

- A. We recommend periodic screening of individuals in high-risk settings including for example: healthcare workers, first responders, employees of long-term care facilities, grocery and convenience store employees, etc.
- B. Screening will include testing for acute phase infection with PCR test for COVID-19, as well as IgG antibody test of prior exposure.
- C. Screening will be on a rotating periodic basis, with weekly 'sampling' of representative portions of the target high-risk groups.
- D. Screening will be available to high-risk workers more than once on a rotating basis.
- E. Asymptomatic individuals will NOT be advised to quarantine while awaiting results of screening tests and will be asked to isolate only in the case of a positive PCR-based test in order to reduce transmission.

- F. A negative PCR test does not definitively exclude the possibility of an individual carrying or being able to transmit COVID-19. There is a measurable level of false negative inaccuracy with all currently available PCR tests, particularly for asymptomatic individuals. Individuals should continue to take appropriate measures such as hand hygiene and use of facial coverings to protect those with whom they interact. Individuals should also report and seek testing if they develop symptoms.
- G. We do not at this time recommend that positive results to IgG antibody testing be used by individuals or employers to determine resource allocation or assignment such as use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). There is scientific uncertainty regarding the significance of positive antibodies, as well as a measurable level of false positive inaccuracy with all currently available antibody tests. Antibody testing over time will help us understand changes in transmission and exposure in Grand County and to plan more effectively as we seek to promote economic activity while keeping our community safe.



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