



News from the Municipality of Anchorage Emergency Operations Center and Providence Health & Services Alaska

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Fifteen new cases of COVID-19 in the Municipality of Anchorage

Anchorage, Alaska: The Municipality of Anchorage Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was informed of 15 new cases of COVID-19 today, the second-largest number reported in the Municipality in a single day since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Ten (10) of today's cases are associated with Providence Transitional Care Center. Twelve (12) people have tested positive for COVID-19 from Providence Transitional Care Center.

“The safety and well-being of our residents and our caregivers remains our top priority, especially during this time,” said Michael Bernstein, M.D., Chief Medical Officer of Providence Health & Services Alaska, “We regret to report that on Friday, May 29, 2020, we learned one of our residents tested positive for COVID-19. We are committed to preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our facility and the community, which is why within 24 hours of learning of this positive case we began testing all of our residents and caregivers for COVID-19. Additional positive cases have been confirmed, and we are waiting for more test results to come back from the lab. Proactively testing everyone in our facility will help us identify asymptomatic cases and isolate those individuals to prevent spread.”

Residents who tested positive remain in their rooms, while continuing to receive compassionate care from experienced caregivers. Caregivers who have tested positive are isolated at home. Caregivers continuing to provide care are following heightened COVID-19 safety precautions, including the use of all appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE), in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines.

Providence caregivers are working vigilantly to prevent the virus from spreading in the facility. They continue daily monitoring of all residents for any signs of illness, especially a fever or cough. Providence is prepared to immediately test anyone who displays symptoms or has a known exposure to COVID-19. Providence Transitional Care Center remains closed to visitors with the exception of end-of-life visits, which are accommodated on a person-by-person basis. In addition to routine disinfecting and cleaning procedures, staff are wiping down high touch areas several times throughout the day and screening is done for everyone who enters the building.



Providence Transitional Care Center is working closely with state and local health authorities, as well as the CDC, to ensure we continue delivering safe, high quality care to all of our residents during the pandemic.

Collection of tests is being completed today in conjunction with the Municipality and many tests are still being run at the State Public Health Laboratory. Another round of universal testing will be done in 6-10 days and a plan has been established for continual testing.

“As we have seen around the country, skilled nursing facilities- which often have patients with underlying chronic conditions being cared for under the same roof- are at high risk of being affected by COVID-19,” said Dr. Bruce Chandler, Chief Medical Officer for the Anchorage Health Department. “Due to an enhanced risk for transmission, facilities like this one have experienced outbreaks of COVID-19 even while diligently following CDC-recommended protective measures like restricting visitors, monitoring residents and staff for symptoms, increased use of PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection. Quickly testing all residents and caregivers can help bring an outbreak under control.”

The Municipality of Anchorage will continue to work closely with Providence Transitional Care Center and the DHSS Section of Epidemiology to monitor the situation and assist with testing, contact tracing and monitoring of all cases.

The Municipality reminds residents to stay vigilant to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by using face coverings in public areas, washing hands often, staying six (6) feet away from others, monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 and staying home if they are sick.

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