



Reimbursement & Policy

Testing policy to support reopening economy.

Dr. Christopher Ball, Chief of the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories, met with IHA member CEOs today to discuss the Testing Task Force's recommendations released last week.

Dr. Ball noted that the committee's initial set of recommendations are part of an ongoing testing strategy that will be revisited and revised over the coming weeks and months. The committee has initially been charged with estimating current testing capacity as well as testing needs to both mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and allow the continued reopening of Idaho's economy.

At this point, the committee is focusing on assessing and expanding the availability of molecular (PCR & Antigen) testing which allows for the diagnosis of currently infected individuals. Serology or antibody tests only detect past infection; which, while it may be beneficial in the identification of potential plasma donors or to detect the prevalence of the virus in our communities or state, does not help with identifying current cases. Focusing on molecular testing can lead to earlier detection of localized outbreaks.

Idaho's current testing capacity, which includes the state's lab, hospital-based and other in-state certified labs, and out-of-state commercial labs, is approximately 7,500 tests per week. When supply availability barriers are removed, those capabilities increase to approximately 23,000 per week. To meet the federal goal of testing 2% of our state's population per month, Idaho would need to process about 8,000 tests per week. The recommendations also addressed focusing on testing groups and priority tiers within those groups.

Dr. Ball noted that while access to testing materials has been a significant impediment to increasing testing capacity, there are signs that this is starting to improve. When asked about Idaho's lower tests per capita, he noted that many/most other states are reporting the sum of both molecular and serological testing whereas Idaho is only reporting molecular testing. Additionally, many testing sites in Idaho are seeing reduced requests for testing. Data from the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center show that Idaho ranks 20th in the number of tests per confirmed case and 16th in the number of tests per COVID-19 death, which are measures of testing scaled to the burden of disease in Idaho.

For additional information, please review the [Testing Task Force Recommendations](#) and [Dr. Ball's presentation](#).

Resources & Equipment

FEMA distributing thermometers for workplaces

Idaho will receive nearly 2,000 non-contact infrared thermometers from the Strategic National Stockpile through a FEMA distribution announced this week. Designed for use in workplaces with high person-to-person interaction, the distribution is designed to support reopening efforts and foster safety for workers and customers. Idaho's allotment will be directed to the state FEMA operations for distribution to localities and businesses.

Virtual Meetings, Education & Updates

Governor's Idaho Rebounds press conference

On Thursday, May 28 at 1:30p MT, Governor Little will discuss how and if Idaho can move to Stage 3 of the re-opening plan. The press conference will be [live streamed on Idaho Public Television](#).

Webinar ~ transforming post-crisis

Join Huron's healthcare and transformation experts to learn how leaders can restore financial stability in the crisis recovery phase while repositioning for growth in a new reality by understanding:

- how crises spur new ideas and transformational change;
- how organizations can plan for current and long-term shifts in consumer behavior, including preferences for telehealth and acute care in the home;
- what actions will generate near-term stability as well as long-term competitive advantage; and
- why understanding and aligning supply and demand is critical to how organizations recover and reposition.

Making Critical Transformation Part of Healthcare's Post-Crisis Plan

Wednesday, June 3 ~ 10a - 11a MT

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