



COVID-19 Report to Members ~ September 17, 2020

Reports are sent on Mondays and Thursdays, unless there's breaking news.

Idaho Rebounds progress

Governor Brad Little will review Idaho's latest metrics and discuss the state's progress on Friday, September 18 at 1p MTN / 12p PAC. Live streaming of the Governor's comments will be available on [Idaho Public Television](#).

Reimbursement & Policy

[A glimpse of relief on the horizon?](#)

This week, a group of House members made up of an equal number of Democrats and Republicans released a \$1.52 trillion stimulus plan. The Problem Solvers Caucus hopes that its proposal, which costs about midway between the House's \$3 trillion package passed in May and a failed bill floated by the Senate totaling about \$500 billion, will get negotiations moving forward.

In an effort to bridge the divide, the group released a bill touching on many areas of interest – liability protections, testing, Medicare loan forgiveness, telehealth, education, unemployment insurance, funding for state and local governments, and more – while also including some triggers based on hospitalization rates and vaccine development that could adjust the bill's final cost.

While President Trump today signaled support for the bipartisan proposal, most observers doubt that a compromise bill will pass Congress before the election.

Resources & Equipment

[Idaho healthcare leader shares COVID insights](#)

A longtime leader in Idaho healthcare spent time with the Idaho Statesman and its readers today answering questions about COVID. You can listen to the interview [here](#) to learn Dr. David Pate's thoughts on where Idaho is headed with coronavirus, the need for flu vaccines, and more. Dr. Pate led St. Luke's Health System for ten years before retiring in January.

This is one of many examples of Idaho's healthcare leaders providing the public with accurate, scientific information. That perspective is critically important for the state to make good decisions that allow Idaho to rebound safely and successfully.

[Oral COVID testing option](#)

To support the fight against COVID-19, Curative, Inc. has developed a [simple oral fluid swab test](#) that is easy to administer, preserves PPE, and reduces exposure risk to healthcare workers. This non-invasive testing procedure is self-collected by the patient under direct supervision of a healthcare worker. Curative can receive samples and return results in about 24-36 hours.

Curative is currently working with a handful of states to meet their testing needs with the oral swabs. They also have contracts with the Department of Defense and the Texas prison system to conduct large-scale testing.

The cost is \$150/test, but discounts are available for bulk purchases. For discount pricing or more information, please contact [Lily Becker](#) at Curative/Gothams.

[CDC suggests mitigation efforts could impact flu season](#)

A new study by the CDC suggests that social distancing, masks, teleworking and other measures could help lessen the impact of the flu this year. A steep decline in flu activity was seen in the US and other countries when mitigation efforts were implemented early in the pandemic. The percent of specimens testing positive for flu decreased from more than 20% to 2.3% at the onset of mitigation actions taken across the country. From May through August, the "interseasonal" flu rate is also at historic lows.

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