

COVID-19 Report to Members ~ September 7, 2021

Reports are sent on Tuesdays, unless there's breaking news.

Crisis Standards of Care for North Idaho

With today's activation of Crisis Standards of Care for the ten hospitals in North Idaho, the situation has moved from extreme to dire. According to the IDHW's release, operations will now move from treating all patients to treating "as many patients as possible." This escalation is the first time in memory that CSC has been activated in Idaho.

The declaration is for all hospitals in PHD1 and PHD2 (below), impacting the residents of ten counties. "Crisis standards of care is a last resort. It means we have exhausted our resources to the point that our healthcare systems are unable to provide the treatment and care we expect," said IDHW Director Dave Jeppesen. "This is a decision I was fervently hoping to avoid. The best tools we have to turn this around is for more people to get vaccinated and to wear masks indoors and in outdoor crowded public places. Please choose to get vaccinated as soon as possible – it is your very best protection against being hospitalized from COVID-19."

This morning, Kootenai Health reported they had begun putting patients in beds in a converted conference room as the facility continues to care for record numbers of patients. On Monday, the hospital had 113 COVID patients with 39 in critical care and 19 of those vented. Normally, the ICU capacity at the hospital is 26. They are now operating about 50 ICU beds by converting other areas, changing nurse to patient ratios, team nursing, and making other operational adjustments.

Hospitals in Public Health Districts 1 and 2

- Benewah Community Hospital ~ St. Maries
- Bonner General Hospital ~ Sandpoint
- Boundary Community Hospital ~ Bonners Ferry
- Clearwater Valley Health ~ Orofino
- Gritman Medical Center ~ Moscow
- Kootenai Health ~ Coeur d'Alene
- Shoshone Medical Center ~ Kellogg
- St. Joseph Regional Medical Center ~ Lewiston
- St. Mary's Health ~ Cottonwood
- Syringa Hospital ~ Grangeville

Reimbursement & Policy

Changes for monoclonal therapy distributions

Due to the substantial surge in cases across the country, HHS has announced temporary changes to how it will distribute monoclonal antibody therapies. In order to maintain an appropriate supply to meet current and future demand, HHS will now:

- limit orders and shipments to only administration sites with HHSProtect accounts and current utilization reporting; and
- review all orders for alignment with utilization.

Hospitals are encouraged to keep up their regular reporting via IRTS or HHSProtect to maintain availability of monoclonal antibody therapy inventory.

IRTS update for ICU bed reporting

Last week, IDHW added a new question to the IRTS reporting system. The Staffed ICU Adult Beds Available field will now be used for the public reporting seen on the [Coronavirus website](#). The new field is designed to have more relevant information available to the public regarding bed status across the state. Prior information had both adult and pediatric beds and may have also included beds that could not be utilized due to staffing shortages.

The beds reported are those traditional, adult critical care beds opened and staffed at the time of the report. IDHW acknowledged that the situation remains fluid and that available beds change frequently throughout the day. As of this morning, nine available ICU beds were reported in IRTS.

Resources & Information

Reducing demand for asymptomatic testing

For emergency departments as well as clinics and urgent cares facing mounting staffing pressures in all areas, redirecting or reducing some patient flow can help. In a recent meeting, Bingham Memorial shared a helpful way to address the influx of people seeking asymptomatic testing.

For asymptomatic people wanting to have tests to allow for travel or attend an event, the hospital reached out to IDHW and 211 for free Vault PCR tests. When potential patients arrive requesting the testing, staff can hand them the testing packet to do at home. The Vault PCR test is done via telehealth with a saliva sample the individual sends directly to the testing lab.

According to Bingham CMO, Ken Newhouse "this service addresses both supply and patient flow." At Bingham, this has lowered the burn rate of testing supplies and alleviated patient registering, data entry, and tracking for asymptomatic testing. Dr. Newhouse pointed out that the home test kits require a smartphone to connect via Zoom and an email address to receive the results, which may inhibit some individuals from utilizing the kits. However, for most, the kits provide a reliable resource to get their test results within 48 hours.

Hospitals can arrange to receive the Vault test kits to distribute by contacting IDHW at testingsupport@dhw.idaho.gov. Individuals can also request their own free test kits by contacting testingsupport@dhw.idaho.gov or Idaho 211 (800.926.2588).

Click to get our COVID-19 Updates

Share this email:



Manage your preferences | Opt out using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

615 N. 7th St.
Boise, ID | 83701 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

