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DSH activities re: COVID-19

1 message

DSH SAC Office Of Communications <OfficeofCommunications@dsh.ca.gov>

Sat, Apr 4, 2020 at 10:40 AM

Dear DSH Stakeholders,

The Department of State Hospitals, along with every other state agency and all levels of government, has mobilized in response to COVID-19 (coronavirus). The health and safety of our patients and staff is our top priority.

DSH has been and continues to actively plan and prepare for COVID-19 across our system, following guidance from the California Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other state and local partners. DSH is actively monitoring the rapidly changing situation so we can respond appropriately. Here are some of the actions the department has taken:

- In mid-March, DSH-Sacramento activated the department's Emergency Operation Center, and hospitals have activated their incident command centers and developed incident action plans to better communicate and coordinate our department's response efforts.
- Hospitals have updated their plans for infection control, respiratory protection, and pandemic response.
- Normal hospital visiting has been prohibited until further notice, except for court-ordered evaluations, other legal matters, or end-of-life care. In the event of other special situations in which visitation may be considered, approval of the hospital's medical director would be required. All approved visitors are subject to a health screening.
- All hospital employees are being screened for symptoms of COVID-19 as they arrive for work. Employees who do not pass the screening are sent home.
- Patients are being screened for symptoms prior to being admitted to our hospitals.
- Patients are being tested for COVID-19 when clinically indicated, to date no patients have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Spaces have been identified and prepared for isolating and treating patients who test positive for COVID-19.
- Patient social distancing measures have been implemented and regular patient activities have been modified.
- Telework is available for positions that are eligible, to the extent that the department can still fulfill its critical essential services to the public.
- Admissions of certain categories of patients have been temporarily suspended. A list of those categories can be found on the DSH website under Treatment.
- Patients and employees have received, and continue to receive, information about how to protect themselves from COVID-19, including activities involving personal hygiene and social distancing.
- DSH programs including the statewide Conditional Release Program, the Los Angeles Community Based Restoration Program and Jail-Based Competency Programs have implemented modified programming to

ensure continued delivery of effective treatment while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

- Members of the Executive Team serve as members of regional and national workgroups and associations with members from other state hospitals across the country. They are monitoring trends and best practices of our state hospitals and other healthcare systems who are planning, preparing and responding to COVID-19.

These actions and others by DSH are part of an ongoing process that will be continuously improved and strengthened by guidance from the California Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other state and local partners.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Clendenin

Director