

COVID-19 Update Meeting Minutes 4/17/20

Testing/Situation Report

- Throughout the past week, Mercy Care together with the CDC and the local Board of Health have tested 1650 individuals over 15 sites, including the largest, congregate shelters, smaller shelters, and recovery centers. This has enabled them to identify individuals who are positive and also those who are at risk to get them out of those current situations.
- There was a total of only 16 positive results for clients and 8 positive staff test results.
- 13 additional test sites are on the list starting today through next week.
- Mercy Care and the CDC will be launching unsheltered testing starting today. This testing will go through this week into next week.
 - Testing will begin today at Gateway from 10 am- 3 pm. Outreach teams will be meeting at the back of Gateway at 9:30 am to canvas the area and ask people to get tested. There will be a free Arby's meal courtesy of the Arthur Blank Foundation.
 - Testing will continue at large food sites starting Sunday. There will be a food gift card incentive and a Chick-fil-A sandwich.
- There is additional capacity for testing going forward. If agencies would like to have testing at their sites, please follow up with Cathryn Marchman (cmarchman@partnersforhome.org).
- PfH is not recommending that shelters require a negative test result for admission.

Isolation Units

- The Isolation Hotel is up and running as of last week. There are 22 guests currently, with 2 more expected this morning.
- PfH and its partners are in daily communication with DPH. They are receiving the positive test results and then PfH is coordinating transportation to the hotel for isolation.
- PfH is currently looking for partners to ensure that individuals can return to shelters upon discharge from the units. Agencies that are interested and able can reach out to Cathryn Marchman (cmarchman@partnersforhome.org).
- PfH and its partners are also looking to stand up a non-congregate shelter for high risk individuals. High risk factors are located on the CDC website and include being over 65 and having certain underlying medical conditions. There will be a process in place to admit individuals.
 - The priority for the facility will be high risk individuals at the airport and those that are unsheltered. Additionally, the facility will be targeted for high risk individuals at congregate shelters. The facility will likely be opened by Tuesday or Wednesday of next week. This facility will be able to house up to 240 individuals and will operate for 90 days. This allows for individuals to stay until they can be discharged to another housing intervention, ideally permanent.
 - There is work being done to identify housing options through identifying a pool of landlords and units, waiving documentation requirements, and looking into master leasing for a temporary solution.
- PfH is actively recruiting staff for both the Isolation Hotel and the non-congregate facility. Please apply through the PfH website:

Outreach/Encampments

- The outreach teams are reconvening this afternoon to discuss the current situation. Currently they are working to recruit individuals to get tested, symptom screening, and indentifying high risk individuals for the non-congregate facility. Any agency or individual that would like to be a part of this work can follow up with Chelsea Arkin (carkin@partnersforhome.org) or Liliana Bahktiari (lbahktiari@partersforhome.org).
- A testing schedule will be sent out today for next week's walk up sites. These sites are not for the general public, but are prioritized for those experiencing homelessness.

Food and Supplies

- Starting this week, 1,400 meals are being delivered to unsheltered individuals and encampments through various partnerships. 500 of these meals are through a partnership with World Central Kitchen and Empire State South.
- Additional meals will be added next week to support shelters and kitchens that are unable to meet their current demand.
- PfH and outreach teams are currently working to remap the routes as encampments have shifted with restaurants closing, etc.
- If an agency or individual would like to assist with delivering meals, please contact Chelsea Arkin (carkin@partnersforhome.org) or Liliana Bahktiari (lbahktiari@partersforhome.org).
- PfH will be receiving a donation of masks through Medshare and will be distributing the masks next week. Please look at the next email for additional information as to when and where they will be distributed.

HMIS/DCA

- Approximately 3,000 unique clients have been symptom screened using the tool in HMIS. Only 11 have come back as symptomatic. Now that testing can also be captured in the system, as test results are coming back HMIS leads are reaching out to those communities that are involved to get their clients connected correctly to isolation, etc.
- DCA is anticipating adding additional data elements for anticipated FEMA funding information coming soon. There will be more information on this next week, but DCA is currently figuring out what elements need to be in place in the system now.
- There is a resource page on the DCA website. It has information for providers on how to access resources for their clients.

Information Sharing, Questions, etc.

- The HUD COVID Waive webinar was on Tuesday. Big takeaways are that a blanket waiver is not serviceable; individual providers need to provide their own intent to use the waiver. Additionally, any agency that intends to use the waiver must have emergency policies and procedures in place for waiver use. The webinar slides will be available on the PfH website. Agencies that have questions about waivers are strongly advised to submit an AAQ.
 - ESG funding is currently not available for a 25% match, but that is still be considered at this time.

- HUD suggested to not worry about the NOFA that will be coming out this summer, but to focus on COVID-19 activities at this times.
- Intown Collaborative Ministries has extra hand sanitizer. Brad Schweers will be getting in contact with Chelsea Arkin and Liliana Bahktiari about which agencies are in need and how to submit a request for hand sanitizer.
- Are non-covid-19 patients being discharge from Grady still able to access recuperative care?
 - Yes, as of yesterday recuperative care is still up and running and taking new clients. This is a process between Mercy Care and Grady.
- Please submit any anecdotal messages or photos of agencies using donated face masks to Jen Williams (jwilliams@partnersforhome.org). PfH would like to submit these to the donors as a thank you for their donations.