

COVID-19 Update 4/3/20

Situation Report

- There are 9 positive cases that the CoC is aware of. Please note that this is not a comprehensive report, but only the cases that have been reported to the CoC by the health care system and the shelter community.
- One individual in the community has passed away. This individual was living in permanent housing with one of our providers.

Testing, Transportation, Isolation Beds

- Mercy Care will be moving forward with testing next week. This will hopefully begin on Wednesday.
- Testing next week will begin with testing all individuals in the large congregate shelters. These individuals are at higher risk due close proximity and limited ability to social distance. Mass shelter testing is CDC sponsored. Entire shelter will be tested in 1- 2 days, including staff. It will take 1 day to get the results. All of the four large shelters will be tested in 10- 12 days.
 - Testing will be outdoors with an intake team, screening team, and testers (12 doctors) at the four major shelter groups: Gateway/Evolution Center, Atlanta Mission, City of Refuge and Salvation Army. Over 1300 tests will be administered during this time. Shelter staff will bring clients through the testing process.
- Any clients that test positive will be transported to isolation units through referrals on the Nurse Line staffed by DPH. DPH will also begin case tracking at this time and any individuals who have a known positive exposure will be transported to quarantine through the same line of referrals.
- Mercy Care will likely be standing up additional testing sites once this initial surge is completed. They are actively looking for places to have these community based and shelter-based testing sites, most likely outdoor in a drive-through set up. Fulton County has given additional funding for testing. Testing will still be limited to individuals who are symptomatic.
- Transportation is ready with Grady and will be for individuals from hospitals or testing sites for isolation or quarantine. This will be accessible through the Nurse Line through DPH.
- Isolation beds were due to be stood up today. The team is on standby to begin but is waiting on one final issue to be resolved between the hotel and DPH.
- These beds will only be for isolation and quarantine. Isolation means an individual has been tested positive and will remain at the unit until symptoms resolve. Quarantine is for individuals who have a known positive exposure. They will be kept at the units to see if they develop symptoms. If they do, they will be moved to the isolation beds and discharged once symptoms have resolved.
- Access to these units will be through the DPH Nurse Line. Hospitals and testing sites are the primary referrals to the isolation beds as they can confirm positive tests and exposures. Referrals can also come through DPH through case tracking.
- There will be evaluation as this system rolls out as to whether there is a need to expand to another hotel.
- PFH has hired an Emergency Response Manager and an Emergency Response Coordinator to stand up the isolation units. 3 RAs have been hired and trained and are ready to begin work. 5 additional RAs will go through orientation on Monday.

- PFH is still looking to hire 4 lead RAs as well as a pool of additional RAs. A few candidates have backed out due to fear of exposure. If other agencies have staffing needs, please email Jen Williams (jwilliams@partnersforhome.org).
- A security company has been contracted and will begin with 3 guards per shift. This number will be ramped up as client intakes increase

Outreach, Encampments, and Food Coordination

- Outreach teams have continued to cover beats throughout the City and specific encampments sites. All beats have now been visited at least once. There is coordinated effort to get supplies to those that requested them during the initial effort. Flyers have also been distributed throughout the city.
- There is a call at 1:30 pm today to assess the current food provider situation. This call will aid in coordination and help PFH and others understand how to support the food providers' efforts as well as any changes in volume, etc.

HMIS Update

- The HMIS steering committee met yesterday and approved a temporary amendment to a procedure. This amendment allows providers to obtain verbal consent from clients. There will be additional information sent out as to the appropriate way to do this. This addendum applies to the next 60 days.
- 1000 screenings have been entered into HMIS in the COA. Out of this 1000, only 5 have been symptomatic. 17 individuals have been tested. 11 were negative and 1 was positive.

Additional Updates

- PFH and partners are working in coordination with other groups to improve alignment and coordination of resource allocation. Specifically, PFH is working with the Blank Foundation and the McKinsey group, who is committed through Atlanta Committee for Progress, to model capacity and needs.
- There is discussion of developing "war room" groups that meet regularly. These groups will help to link providers to resources and will be based on agencies specific needs.
- Coordinated asks to suppliers are more powerful than individual asks.

Questions

- Is there testing being done for clients who are being referred to PSH, especially the shared units?
 - There is not capacity to test everyone.. Testing is reserved for those who are symptomatic.
- Are you confident that the people who are administering the test are adequately trained?
 - Based on Mercy Care's efforts to obtain doctors and nurse practitioners for this effort, yes we are confident.
- How does the statewide shelter in place impact our work?

- The handout provided by the state government outlines that our work is exempted from this and is considered essential. Staff could carry their badge or a letter from their agency just in case.
- Are the staff members working the isolation units going to have adequate PPE?
 - Yes, DPH has provided PPE (goggles, gowns, gloves, foot protection, and masks).
- Rebecca's tent is closing on April 15. This is not due to COVID-19, but because the shelter is seasonal. They currently house 6 women.
- Covenant House currently has availability for aged 16-24, including women with children. Any young women between those ages from Rebecca's tent should be referred to Covenant House.