



Chester County Health Department

The Chester County Health Department (CCHD), operating in support of Chester County and Delaware County, is sharing the following update for healthcare providers regarding: **Interim Specimen Collection and COVID-19 Testing Guidance.**

Testing

We are still facing limitation on our COVID-19 testing. Despite an increase in the laboratory capacity to run the tests, there is a nationwide shortage of specimen collection kits, and some shortages of personal protective equipment. If your medical practice has supplies you are not using or if your practice is currently closed, consider working with your other local practices and colleagues to share items such as viral transport media, nasopharyngeal swabs, specimen collection kits, N95 or equivalent respirators, face masks, gowns, gloves, face shields, or goggles. Donation to the County for distribution to healthcare providers in need is also an option, as the County continues to receive and fill resource requests from many providers and first responder agencies daily. Contact your local municipal government office and ask to speak with the emergency management coordinator. We need to protect our healthcare workforce!

We continue to recommend **prioritizing testing for those in whom a test would make a difference in management.**

Considerations for prioritization of testing include:

- Patient is a symptomatic healthcare worker or first responder
- Patient resides in a congregate setting and is symptomatic
- Patient requires hospitalization for relevant symptoms and has no alternate diagnosis
- Patient is at risk for severe disease (age >60 years, chronic medical conditions) and testing would change management

We do **not** recommend testing for those in whom management would not change (e.g. isolation while symptomatic, regardless of test results or regardless of cause). We do **not**

recommend routine use of COVID-19 testing for screening of exposed healthcare employees, or for clearing healthcare workers to come back to work.

For guidance on healthcare workers with COVID-19 returning to work, refer to <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/HAN/2020-PAHAN-488-03-17-ALT%20-Discontin.pdf>

For guidance on management of healthcare workers exposed to COVID-19, refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html#table1>.

Procedure for Specimen Collection Referrals

Physician referral remains the primary model for specimen collection access. There is no public testing at this time in either county. For patients whom you determine meet these criteria and need COVID-19 testing:

- If you are affiliated with any hospital system, follow the procedures for referral of your patients to that system. If your patient is uninsured, please discuss that with the referral line at the time of referral.
- Main Line Health - Call 484-580-1919 (provider line ONLY, no patient calls)
- Penn Medicine - Call 267-758-4408 (provider line ONLY, no patient calls)
- Tower Health - Call 484-329-6600 to coordinate, and specify you are a physician for expedited connection.
- Crozer Keystone - Crozer providers only may fax prescription to 610-447-2794. Patients will call 610-447-2110 (before 6:00 PM) to schedule.
- Mercy-Fitzgerald - Mercy providers only may fax patient information, a lab order, and a diagnosis code to 610-237-2555. They will call back to schedule a test.
- If you are a physician who is not affiliated with any healthcare system, the healthcare systems listed above, except Mercy and Crozer, are accepting eligible patients with a physician referral, regardless of network. Please use the numbers listed above to follow the specimen collection procedures for each system.
- CCHD is not collecting specimens at this time.
- Commercial laboratories are not collecting specimens at this time.
- Certain medical practices and urgent care centers are collecting specimens but this changes rapidly and CCHD is not maintaining a list of locations at this time.

Please distribute as appropriate.