Health Alert

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Request for Providers to Submit Laboratory Reports Due to Delayed COVID-19 Electronic Laboratory Reporting

Current Situation

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is experiencing an issue with routing electronic laboratory reporting (ELR) submissions from all laboratories to the statewide disease surveillance system (CalREDIE). This issue, which may have begun around July 25th, has resulted in an underreporting of COVID-19 cases. The issue is also impacting local health departments’ ability to investigate some cases and identify close contact, two activities critical to slowing the spread of COVID-19. It is unclear at this time how many individuals with COVID-19 may not have been processed by CalREDIE over the last two weeks. Laboratories have been instructed by CDPH to provide laboratory reports by fax to local public health in the interim. However, this process may be incomplete and delayed. Until this CalREDIE laboratory reporting issue is completely resolved, Monterey County Public Health is requesting that providers implement the following case reporting procedures which will improve the reliability that all COVID-19 positive laboratory tests are received by Public Health which in turn will identify all county residents with COVID-19 that require case investigation.

Case Reporting Procedures

- For medical providers reporting by fax, please include a copy of the laboratory report with the completed Confidential Morbidity Report (CMR) form.
  - CMRs with attached laboratory reports will be prioritized by Public Health over CMRs without laboratory reports.
- Reports may be submitted by:
  - CalREDIE Provider Portal with lab reports scanned into the Electronic Filing Cabinet (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/CalREDIE-Provider-Portal.aspx)

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Public Health case investigation and contact tracing resources will be re-directed to manual data entry of laboratory reports due to the CDPH laboratory report routing issue. MCHD will continue to attempt to contact all individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 to obtain surveillance information, provide education, elicit close contacts, and reinforce isolation directions. Because MCHD may not receive timely notification of a positive result, MCHD follow-up of cases and their contacts may be delayed. Monterey County Public Health is also requesting that providers assist in initiating the case investigation process by implement the following case investigation procedures.

**Case Investigation Procedures**

- Instruct patients to remain in isolation until all the following criteria are met.
  1. Ten days have passed since the patient first developed symptoms of COVID-19, or ten days have passed since the patient first tested positive for COVID-19 if they had no symptoms
  2. Their symptoms have improved, and
  3. They have had no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine
- Obtain a list of your patient’s close contacts and their phone numbers and submit the list with the CMR form to Public Health.
- Give patients return to work notes while their tests are pending or when they receive positive test results.

Your patience and assistance in this matter are greatly appreciated.

**Resources**

- Self-Isolation Instructions:
  - English: [https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95180](https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95180)
  - Spanish: [https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95178](https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95178)
- Self-Quarantine Instructions:
  - English: [https://countyofmonterey.sharepoint.com/sites/infonet/itd](https://countyofmonterey.sharepoint.com/sites/infonet/itd)
  - Spanish: [https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95174](https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=95174)
- Infographic to Assess Exposure Risk:
  - English: [https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=92544](https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=92544)
  - Spanish: [https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=92542](https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=92542)
- Monterey County Health Department Communicable Disease Unit:
  - Phone: 831-755-4521 during normal business hours; 831-755-5100 after hours and ask for the Hazardous Materials Team, who will connect you with the on-call Health Officer
  - [www.mtyhd.org/COVID19](http://www.mtyhd.org/COVID19)

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