



COLLIN COUNTY

Collin County Health Care Services
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 1, 2020
TO: Bill Bilyeu, County Administrator
FROM: Candy Blair, CCHCS Administrator
RE: Proposal for Contracting with Local Health Care Providers to Increase COVID-2019 Testing Capacity in Collin County

The county has been tasked with providing additional COVID-2019 testing resources to enhance the epidemiology and surveillance of COVID-2019 in Collin County. I am asking for \$1.5 million as a preliminary budget to enhance testing. After reviewing the possible options to maximize the benefit of these funds, I am sharing two possible areas for COVID-testing expansion: Collin County employees and uninsured residents of Collin County.

County Employees

Of the \$1.5 million, \$500,000 would be utilized to ensure our county employees receive COVID-2019 testing in order to help maintain the continuity of operations for our local government functions. Regardless of whether our county employees elect to have the county's insurance coverage, or if the insurance carriers will continue to waive costs associated with COVID-2019, we must take steps to have a reliable means of assessing the illness and/or recovery amongst our county employees. It is only through testing of employees that we can learn who needs to be isolated or who has the antibodies to safely be placed in public facing positions.

Uninsured Residents

The remaining \$1m would be allocated to extend testing via community health care providers to individuals who do not currently have insurance benefits. As we continue our efforts in critical contact tracing activities, expanding our testing to uninsured individuals will allow us to more quickly identify and isolate contagious individuals who might otherwise not have been tested.

According to the most recent county health rankings report, it is estimated that 12%, or 124,167 residents, of Collin County's population are uninsured. Considering the recent economic impact of COVID-2019, the number of uninsured residents is potentially much higher.

For the uninsured population, we are proposing to partner with one or more health care agencies to provide COVID-2019 testing services. A doctor's referral or having a doctor onsite at the testing point is a minimum requirement, as is the PCR swab test. Our department reached out to multiple organizations to request information regarding their current capabilities and anticipated capacity for COVID-2019 testing. Responses from these organizations are still being collected. We expect updated information from various vendors in the coming days; however, sufficient information has been gathered to reflect a price range of \$129-\$349 per testing strategy.

Depending on the price point, the proposed budget has the potential to yield from 2,865 to upwards of 7,751 tests for the uninsured. At this time, some decisions regarding testing of the uninsured population are requested of the Court:

1. Requirement of only FDA-approved tests?
2. Requirement of the Antibody blood test in addition to the mandatory PCR swab*?

It is the recommendation of the Healthcare Department to:

- Require testing be offered only to uninsured Collin County residents
- Require all tests funded by Collin County be FDA-approved
- Require the Antibody blood test in addition to the mandatory PCR swab for county employees only

Thank you for your consideration.

* Current medical guidance from the CDC describes two primary methods for testing for COVID-2019: diagnostic tests using swabs for collecting samples from the patient's respiratory system and serological (antibody) blood. Diagnostic tests such as nasal swabs are generally being used to detect current infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes the COVID-2019 illness. Antibody blood tests are being used to determine if a patient has been previously infected.