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Siouxland District Health Department Provides COVID-19 Testing Site Information

Testing for the COVID-19 virus has been occurring in the Siouxland area, and is continuing to increase. The testing available has been limited and based upon the health status of the individual as determined by their physician. Over the past couple of weeks, a collaboration of local medical providers has been working together to put plans into place to further increase the availability for testing in the community, and today we are glad to announce that a designated testing clinic will become available starting on Friday, March 27th.

In planning for the designated site, along with the need for increasing the availability of testing, consideration needed to be given to reducing the burden on the healthcare community by:

1. Assuring that the people most in need of testing are getting tested.
2. Reducing the usage of personal protective equipment that is involved when testing individuals.
3. Limiting an ill person's exposures to other people and places.

All testing done at this new clinic location must be ordered by an individual's primary care physician. If a person is feeling ill to the extent that would normally cause them to seek medical care, they should call their primary care physician. The physician will do an assessment of their health status and then submit an order for the testing if they feel it is warranted. Medical providers will then submit their orders to the testing clinic and the patient will be contacted directly and provided with a time and place to report for testing.

Only individuals with the appropriate orders will be allowed into the testing location. It will not be accommodating individuals on a walk-in basis, but only upon recommendation and orders from the primary care provider.

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About Siouxland District Health Department

Siouxland District Health Department, the public health agency for Woodbury County, is creating "A healthy community for all" by "leading a collaborative effort to build a healthier community through improved access to health services, education and disease prevention." They provide public health nursing, nutrition, laboratory, health planning and environmental services. For more information on Siouxland District Health Department visit www.siouxlanddistricthealth.org.

Siouxland District Health Department does not directly provide COVID-19 testing, nor do we make the determination of whether a person needs to be tested or not, but we are working closely with our local medical community to increase the testing that is available. Partners involved with the planning include: Family Healthcare of Siouxland, MercyOne Clinics, Prairie Pediatrics, Siouxland Medical Education Foundation, Siouxland Community Health Center and UnityPoint-St. Luke's. It is through their combined efforts that this service will be offered.

We also want to remind everyone that people who are only mildly ill from COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Many will not need to seek medical care or be tested to confirm that they have COVID-19. *Anyone* who is experiencing respiratory illness, whether diagnosed or not, needs to follow the same recommendations:

If you are ill, stay home and isolate from others in the house until:

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)

AND

- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)

AND

- At least seven days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

In addition, family members or other close contacts of either a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 should stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days.

Siouxland District Health Department is also working to clarify the number of tests that have been conducted within our community. With the addition of private laboratories that can do the test, the total numbers of tests done in Iowa, or Woodbury County specifically, have not been something that was available to us. We have only been able to gather estimates and not specific numbers. The labs are slowly beginning to report the total number of tests done, and not just the positive results, so this data is becoming more available and we are working to clarify what our testing numbers are and will share more when the numbers are available.

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