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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: April 6, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: **Questions to the Governor's Staff through the County Supervisors Association**

The County has been providing questions to the Governor's staff through the County Supervisors Association asking a number of specific questions regarding policy, regulation and/or health facility licensure.

We will add to this list as issues arise, as State policy direction is necessary.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator

Questions Sent to the Governor's Staff through the County Supervisors Association

Sent April 2, 2020

1. County Public Health Agencies throughout the State have been or will be asked to perform COVID-19 testing, which includes both a sample collection through some type of medical provider but also the actual laboratory test. The patient's medical insurance provider generally pays for the laboratory test. However, there are a very large number of uninsured individuals in the State.

How will uninsured testing costs be reimbursed to County public health agencies? Will it be from the COVID-19 fund set aside by the legislature?

2. During the stay-at-home period, there are a number of essential law enforcement or corrections officers and possibly emergency medical technicians, who cannot, in doing their jobs, observe social distancing standards.

Given the priority for personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare professionals, if frontline law enforcement officials and correction officers are not provided with PPE, should they be compensated with hazardous duty pay? If so, would this be a category in which the COVID-19 legislative relief package could be used to reimburse counties, cities and towns who would provide hazardous duty pay under these circumstances?

3. Skilled nursing facility licenses requires a certain ratio of healthcare professionals to clients.

In the case of where there is an outbreak of COVID-19 occurs in a specific nursing facility, and given potential transmission to healthcare staff, it is possible these standards may not be met on a temporary basis. Can these licenses or standards be temporarily suspended in such cases? The alternative would be to transport these clients to other facilities which would worsen the possible spread of COVID-19.

4. Are there any State incentives that can be provided to direct healthcare professionals to skilled nursing facilities that have a documented outbreak of COVID-19 in the facility to ensure appropriate patient care staffing standards are maintained?

5. Many skilled nursing facilities provide transport of their clients to and from specialized services such as dialysis or other medical appointments.

Is there a regulatory State or federal process by which these specialized services could be imported into a skilled nursing facility that has a documented COVID-19 outbreak?

6. The Santa Cruz Valley Hospital is a relatively new facility located immediately south of Green Valley, a major retirement community in Pima County. This facility has had a difficult time surviving and has been through two bankruptcy reorganizations. It is

a new facility with a bed capacity of approximately 35, which could be expanded. On March 30, 2020 the Chief Executive Officer, Kelly Adams, communicated with the Governor asking that the State provide support to prevent closure of the facility in the coming weeks. This request should be taken seriously by the State who should take whatever actions necessary to prevent the hospital's closure and, in fact, indicate how the hospital can be significantly expanded in bed capacity at little additional expense. This is particularly critical as the State is considering standing up other field hospitals in response to COVID-19.

Sent 4/3/2020-

CSA Question for the Governor

1. Potential Financial Assistance to Hospitals – Based on my conversation with two major hospital CEOs, it appears their number of occupied beds is substantially decreased as compared with normal operation. We understand this is as a result of the request to eliminate elective surgeries and other elective activities. This financial stress is having some hospitals consider furloughs or other actions for healthcare employees.

What type of assistance can be provided to these hospitals who are now operating at very low levels of occupation?

While the COVID-19 surge may occupy all of the hospital beds in the future and provide longer-term relief, we need to insure hospitals are financially stable and available when we need them.