



**Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 52
April 4, 2020, 8:30 p.m. (ChST)**

**Six Test Positive for COVID-19; SMS Alerts Being Utilized;
DPHSS Updates; Visitation Suspended at GMHA**

Breaking News Found at Governor Leon Guerrero's Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/govlougum/>

The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) tested 19 individuals for COVID-19 on Saturday, April 4, 2020 with conclusive results. Six (6) tested positive through DPHSS and 13 tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

The DPHSS overall count also includes nine positive cases that were tested by the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) in San Diego.

To date, a total of 93 cases tested positive with 20 patients who have recovered and four deaths.

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19		
Tested by DPHSS Guam Public Health Lab (GPHL)	Tested by NHRC	Total
84	9	93

All 69 laboratory-confirmed remaining cases are in isolation.

SMS Text Alerts

The Joint Information Center (JIC) is working with local telecommunication companies in an effort to provide the most up to date information to the community through Short Message Service (SMS) text alert capabilities.

The community can expect to receive text messages from either a 311 phone number or (671) 478-0208. The message received will reiterate official JIC press releases. This is not a scam and is part of the overall effort to enhance communication. The JIC recognizes the SMS text messages as just one form of communication and utilizes multiple to release information:

- Joint Information Center email distribution list. To subscribe, email media.distro@guam.gov.
- DPHSS Website: <http://dphss.guam.gov/covid-19/>
- GHS/OCD Website: <https://ghs.guam.gov/coronavirus-covid-19>
- Governor Lou Leon Guerrero's Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/govlougum>
- GHS/OCD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GHSOCD/>

- Contact the COVID-10 Hotline from a local number: Dial 311
- Contact the Joint Information Center: (671) 478-0208/09/10
- SMS Text Alerts

COVID-19 Medicare and Medicaid Information Available

Medicare beneficiaries may access information related to the novel coronavirus at <https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus>

Medicare covers the lab tests for COVID-19. The patient pays no out-of-pocket costs. Medicare covers all medically necessary hospitalizations. This includes if the patient is diagnosed with COVID-19 and might otherwise have been discharged from the hospital after an inpatient stay, but instead needed to stay in the hospital under quarantine. The usual Medicare coinsurance and deductible would be used for these services.

At this time, there's no vaccine for COVID-19. However, if one becomes available, it will be covered by all Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D). Medicare will pay laboratory technicians to travel to a beneficiary's home to collect a specimen for COVID-19 testing, eliminating the need for the beneficiary to travel to a healthcare facility for a test and risk exposure to themselves or others. Under certain circumstances, hospitals and other entities will also temporarily be able to perform tests for COVID-19 on people at home and in other community-based settings.

Telehealth & Related Services

Some patients may be able to communicate with their doctors or certain practitioners without going to the doctor's office in person for a full visit. Medicare pays for "virtual check-ins"—brief, virtual services with your physician or certain practitioners where the communication is not related to a medical visit within the previous seven (7) days and does not lead to a medical visit within the next 24 hours (or soonest appointment available).

The patient would need to consent verbally to using virtual check-ins and their doctor must document that consent in their medical record before use of the service. The usual Medicare coinsurance and deductible is used for these services.

Medicare also pays for patients to communicate with their doctors using online patient portals without going to the doctor's office. Like the virtual check-ins, the patient must initiate these individual communications with their primary medical provider.

Beware of Scammers

Scammers may use the coronavirus national emergency to take advantage of people. As always, guard your Medicare card like a credit card, check Medicare claims summary forms for errors, and if someone calls asking for your Medicare Number, hang up. For more information, call the Division of Senior Citizens Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at 735-7421/7415, or contact Chad Palomo by email at chad.palomo@dphss.guam.gov.

Visitation Suspended at GMHA

All visitation at the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority (GMHA) has been suspended, effective immediately. GMHA acknowledges this will be difficult for families, but the measures have been put in place for the safety of the GMHA patients, staff and the wider local community.

Use of Personal Face Masks in Effect for GMHA

In an effort to preserve Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the GMHA is requiring everyone entering the hospital to wear a personal face mask.

The proper PPE by the respective unit is and will continue to be provided to all staff who provide patient care or who enter patient rooms. All staff who do not provide patient care or enter patient care rooms are expected to use their own personal face masks.

While these measures are important for safety purposes, it is not a substitute for social distancing. Keeping a safe distance and practicing good hygiene will continue to remain a priority at GMHA.

For inquiries on COVID-19, contact 311 through a local number, or call the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10.

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