

Daily Coronavirus Response Update Call

National Update-Ben Moser

Ben began by stating that this is Day 8 of the National Emergency. He began by sharing some of the news headlines from major newspapers across the country. The New York Times reports that hospitals are struggling to prepare for a surge of coronavirus patients. The Washington Post reports that restrictions ramp up in California. The Governor has ordered everyone to stay home and warns that over 20 million Californians could be infected with the virus over the next eight weeks. The Los Angeles Times' report is similar stating that California's Governor has ordered all Californians to stay home. He continued by stating that there is some good news. The Boston Globe reports that Massachusetts has opened their first large scale drive thru testing facility. This sounds like a good model for other metro areas around the nation. The Wall Street Journal reports that stocks rise, and the dollar falls amid a tumultuous week and the Atlanta Journal Constitution reports that the state of Georgia is approving quick licensing for nurses. Also, the Atlanta Falcons have signed running back Todd Gurley. The Center of Disease Control confirms that there are over 10,000 cases currently in the United States and there have been over 150 deaths. The World Health Organization says that there are over 200,000 cases worldwide, 100,000 of those were in the first three months and they have identified the other 100,000 in the past 12 days. The state of Alabama has been under a State of Emergency since last Friday. There are currently 287 confirmed cases in Georgia and 10 deaths. This is out of 1831 tests that have been performed.

Columbus Consolidated Government Update-Mayor Skip Henderson

Mayor Henderson thanked Ben and Betsy for these calls. He apologized for not having been on every call. He and the city government have been on several calls a day with the White House, the Governor's office, the state Department of Public Health and other local officials. He and other local officials have a daily call in order to stay on top of the information. He thinks that what the Community Foundation and United Way are doing is critical. He thinks that what makes Columbus such a unique place is that people are willing to step up and help without being asked. He receives text and emails daily from people looking to help. He will commit to making at least two of these calls a week because he wants to make sure that callers are receiving up to date and accurate information from the city. He added our first coronavirus case has been confirmed in Muscogee County. Personal editorial: He believes that the only reason we have not had more confirmed cases is due to the limited test availability. He visited the drive thru testing site at the Department of Public Health yesterday and thanked them for what they are doing, he also thanked public safety personnel who were keeping order. The site is running well. They have not had any issues but have had to turn people away who don't fall into the priority groups. These include medical personnel, first responders, individuals over 60 and individuals with compromised immune systems. He thinks that these tests are critical to monitor where the test is moving. Lack of testing availability

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can create anxiety. He continues to lobby the Governor's office to not forget about Columbus, the second largest city in Georgia. He added that they are continuing to stress social distancing in the community. As of right now they have not taken any steps other than closing public facilities. However, this will change. They are in the process of defining and clarifying which businesses will be impacted as they are going to make some restriction changes in the operations of some types of businesses in Columbus. He added that no decision will be made without considering the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of this community and the financial stability of this community. They are factoring in everything they can in order to make the wisest decision. There will be a press release this afternoon. They are still looking for opportunities to send staff home to work remotely. Those that can have. They are still working on protocol to get others away from the public contact. They are also looking to postpone certain local fees and taxes for local businesses in order to cut down on the size of the crowds in our facilities and to give business some time as their revenues are slow right now. The Mayor concluded by stating that we are in control of how fast or slow this virus spreads. He asked everyone to continue to follow the Centers of Disease Control guidelines. Stay home if you can and wash your hands, etc.

Muscogee County School District Update-Dr. David Lewis

Dr. Lewis began by stating that they are continuing the feeding program. He had a conversation with Betsy Covington yesterday and they are trying to determine how to continue the feeding through Spring Break. He stated that he is a part of the Governor's State Superintendent Advisory Council. They met yesterday and talked about a lot of things pertaining to school closures across the state and what that will look like in the foreseeable future. They also talked about grading, disparity in the state concerning access to technology, providing instructional material to students at home and graduation. He stated that all these issues will be decided upon next week so that there can be a consistent message across the state. Muscogee County is preparing for additional instructional materials to be available for students for an additional 20 days past Spring Break. The District Office is closed except for 10 people including himself who are working essential functions such as payroll. They are planning to close schools (they are already closed to the public) once all the instructional packages are ready.

Piedmont Columbus Regional Update-Joel Ames

Joel Ames began by stating that they have opened a sampling site for Piedmont patients of Piedmont physicians who meet the criteria. The site is not opened for the public. They are taking swabs and sending them off for testing. They did three yesterday and one so far today as of 9:20am. Although they have not had their first confirmed case yet, they do anticipate it happening and they are prepared. He added that this is a good time to be a part of Piedmont because of their resources and expertise. Billy Holbrook of MercyMed asked if they will be collecting samples through the weekend.

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Joel answered that is not currently planned but if something changes, he will email Ben. He reiterated that this site is only for Piedmont patients referred by at Piedmont doctor.

Home for Good Update-Pat Frey

Pat began by stating that the Governor's Task Force Subcommittee on the Vulnerable Population, Transportation, and Sheltering of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness met (virtually)yesterday. Communities around the state are reporting the same needs and shortages. There is a lack of testing kits available and the state Department of Public Health are reporting that even thermometers are on a two-month backorder. This hinders being able to monitor those coming in and out of the shelters to determine if they have fevers. Cleaning supplies are at an all-time low. Some of the shelters in Atlanta are partnering with hotels for cleaning supplies as they have little or no customers. They have pushed out guidance information for shelters and they also have a screening tool for shelter staff to monitor what is going on in their shelters. Details of other things to come with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Housing and Urban Development on how to deal with clients experiencing homelessness who may test positive. Also, there has been some loosen of guidelines for federal and state funding availability for reimbursement of services in response to this crisis. There are also shelter staffing concerns as some employees are not able to come to work because their children are out of school. Also, safety of the staff that is there is another concern as some shelter staff are volunteers who are older and have health conditions themselves.

Ben gave a quick community update. The YMCA facilities will be closing beginning tonight at 6:00pm. They will update their status at 3:00pm on Friday, March 27.

Crisis Fund Update-Betsy Covington

Betsy began by stating that the fund is up, running and beginning to get a tremendous amount of response from donors which is wonderful. They are also hearing about a lot of needs. They are making improvements to the website so that nonprofits that have begun to see impact can let them know who they are. Donors and nonprofits can go to the Community Foundation's website at CFCV.com. There is a tab for donors and a tab for nonprofits. There is good information about the fund on what they anticipate funding what the priorities are likely to be. They are going to be as flexible as possible as everyone is in a learning mode. Betsy added that this is something no one really knows how to do but United Way and the Community Foundation think that it is critical that they offer people a positive way to respond to this crisis. She added that this is what our community is great at they are gratified to see people step up. For questions or more information go to CFCV.com/coronavirus or the United Way website.

Open Forum Update

Tom Waynick of the Pastoral Institute stated that they have adjusted their hours to keep a balance between protecting their clients and protecting themselves and being

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available for the community. All updates will be posted on their website as they will be adjusting hours as time goes on.

Amy Bryan of the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce stated that everyone knows that the President has a stimulus relief package on his desk. The Chamber will be hosting a virtual small business roundtable on next Thursday at 9:00am with Congressman Ferguson and about 10 small business owners from each sector of small business. The Mayor's office will also be participating. They will discuss the federal relief package and what it will mean for small businesses. They will also discuss what other resources may be available. The call will be recorded and will later be distributed to the masses. Also, because the Governor has declared a State of Emergency in Georgia there are some FDA ((Food and Drug Administration) funds available. She encouraged small businesses to go online and see if they are eligible. The Chamber is also working on a dedicated page on their website where these resources will be posted.

Natalie Mann of the Columbus Health Department stated that the response is overwhelming at their drive thru testing site. Also, their hotline is open, and they are prescreening callers. If they have symptoms, they are encouraging them to go over and get screened. However, tests are very limited currently.

Betsy thanked Natalie and stated that she and Ben have discussed that it would be beneficial to have someone from the health department on the line each day to give an update at the top of the agenda. Natalie answered that would not be a problem. Ben gave her his email so that she could confirm after speaking with her department.

Billy Holbrook of MercyMed stated that they are also collecting specimens and sending them off to the labs. They are receiving referrals from the health department of people that have been prescreened. They have also made a few changes in their office schedule however they are still open for business and seeing patients. They are available if anyone needs anything or has any questions.

Ben stated that the United Way website and the 211 websites are good sources of information for resources.

Betsy thanked Ben for the reminder, and she thanked everyone on the call. The next call will be Monday, March 23,2020 at 10:00am. She reminded everyone to be safe.