

Weekly Coronavirus Response Update Call

National and/or State News Update-Ben Moser

Ben gave the following updates concerning the coronavirus that causes COVID-19:

New York Times:

- At least 983 new coronavirus deaths and 74,410 new cases were reported in the United States on October 27. Over the past week, there have been an average of 73,094 cases per day, an increase of 39 percent from the average two weeks earlier.
- As of Wednesday morning, more than 8,851,500 people in the United States have been infected with the coronavirus and at least 226,600 have died, according to a New York Times database.
- In 39 states and territories, including Alabama and Georgia, new cases are higher and staying high
- In 8 states and territories new cases are lower but going up
- In 7 states and territories new cases are lower and staying low

Elevated Issue of Local Concern or Awareness-Ben Moser

- And for the elevated issue of concern this morning, from the New York Times:
- The headline: U.S. Hospitals Are Reeling Under a 46 Percent Spike in COVID-19 Patients
- The number of people hospitalized with the coronavirus has climbed significantly from a month ago, straining cities that have fewer resources to weather the surges.
- The exploding case numbers point to a volatile new phase in the pandemic, coming after earlier waves hit large cities such as New York, then Sun Belt states like Florida and Arizona. While some of those places have begun to bring the virus under control, the surge of hospitalizations is crippling some cities with fewer resources.
- In El Paso, where the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 has more than tripled over the past three weeks, doctors at University Medical Center have started airlifting some patients to hospitals as far away as San Antonio while treating others in a field hospital in a nearby parking lot. Across the border in Mexico, the mayor of Ciudad Juárez, himself hospitalized after testing positive for the virus for the second time, is urging a temporary ban on United States citizens crossing into his city.
- “We have never seen this in El Paso,” said Dr. Joel Hendryx, chief medical officer at University Medical Center, one of the largest hospitals along the border. Citing the need for field hospitals, Dr. Hendryx drew a sharp contrast to the city’s earlier surge in July, when mitigation measures drove case numbers down.
- Dr. Hendryx’s hospital had 195 inpatient coronavirus cases as of Tuesday compared with about 30 a month ago. In addition to the parking lot tents, officials in El Paso are converting the downtown convention center into a 50-bed hospital. Hundreds of health workers from other parts of Texas are deploying to El Paso, including an ambulance strike team with paramedics from the Houston area.

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- The situation is also becoming critical in states such as Idaho, Missouri, New Mexico and Utah, with frontline workers exhausted and hospitals struggling to find replacements for those testing positive each day.
- Across the country, case numbers have risen to fearsome new levels in recent days, with the seven-day average for new cases exceeding 70,000 for the first time in the pandemic. Twenty-six states are at or near record numbers for new infections. More than 500,000 cases have been announced in the past week. And exactly zero states are seeing sustained declines in case numbers.
- On a per capita basis, smaller cities and rural counties in the Upper Midwest and Mountain West are struggling most acutely. North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Montana lead the country in new infections per capita. Of the 12 metro areas with the highest rates of new cases over the past two weeks, 10 are in North Dakota or Wisconsin.
- But the dismal trend lines are not confined to those regions. North Carolina, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and West Virginia have recently set seven-day records for new cases. And more big cities are starting to spiral, with alarming trends emerging in Chicago, Milwaukee and Newark.
- And while the escalating case numbers had not been accompanied by a steep rise in deaths, that trend is starting to change. About 800 deaths are now being recorded across the country each day, far fewer than in the spring but up slightly from earlier this month.
- Remain vigilant, wear a mask, practice social distancing and be aware of overcrowding enclosed and/or poorly ventilated spaces.

Economic Sector and Impact Area Updates

Non-Profit

Health

St. Francis-Emory Healthcare Update-Melody Trimble

Melody gave the following updates:

- The hospital is continuing efforts to care for patients, COVID-19 as well as non-COVID-19.
- They are continuing to see their number of COVID-19 hospitalizations hold.
- Reminder to continue to be vigilant and prepare for flu season. Encouraging everyone to get a flu shot.
- The hospital is doing well, and they are glad to be part of the solution and care for others in our community.

Housing

Home for Good/United Way Update-Pat Frey

Pat gave the following updates:

- Pleased to announce that yesterday they were able to finalize the contract with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the ESG Cares funding for our seven-county region.

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- The implementation workshops will begin next week with their new partners in this endeavor, SafeHouse Ministries and Enrichment Services Program.
- The projects will include rapid rehousing, street outreach and non-congregant shelter. After the first of the year they hope to also focus on prevention after the lifting of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention moratorium on evictions.

Grants/Projects Update-Betsy Covington

Betsy gave the following updates:

- No new grants to announce this week from the Coronavirus Response Fund.
- Total grants to date are \$1,200,423 which is remarkable.
- Fortunate that the numbers in our community are good but as we look at other communities across the country, we are reminded that the virus is still here.
- This call will remain open as long as it is needed, and the Coronavirus Response Fund will also remain open to the nonprofit community as long as it is needed.
- Thankful for the generosity to the fund and to see the good that is being done.

Making Connections (Open Forum Updates)

Ben began by asking a question

- Are there places that anyone could recommend getting information about how to safely celebrate Thanksgiving this year with COVID-19?

Bradley Turner Foundation Update-Gilbert Miller

Gilbert gave the following updates:

- Resources to help manage Thanksgiving, holidays and family gatherings during COVID-19:
- <https://www.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/how-to-celebrate-thanksgiving-safely-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic.h00-159385890.html>
- <https://www.solvehealth.com/blog/visiting-grandparents-during-covid-holidays-2020>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>
- <https://www.uchealth.org/today/holiday-gatherings-in-2020-health-experts-provide-tips-to-safely-navigate-the-holidays-during-a-pandemic/>
- <https://www.statnews.com/2020/10/16/health-experts-thanksgiving-advice-in-the-time-of-covid-plan-plan-plan/>
- <https://www.realsimple.com/holidays-entertaining/holidays/thanksgiving/how-to-host-thanksgiving-during-coronavirus>