

THIS IS A RAPIDLY EVOLVING AND FLUID SITUATION. INFORMATION AND ACTION ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME. BE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE AND PATIENT.

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS WIDELY

4/5/2020 #1 Crowley/Otero COVID-19 Update

Please take the time to read and understand this entire message. I know it is kind of long, please read the whole thing anyway!

Internet links: Before I send out each update, I check the links to make sure they are active. However, links do change from time to time, so the links I sent out today may not be the same tomorrow. You may have to search around a bit.

New COVID-19 positive case

Hello to all. I was informed this morning (Sunday, 4/5/2020) that we have another laboratory confirmed case in Otero County.

Out of respect for patient privacy, we will only release the following information (No other information will be released at this time):

- ✓ The patient
 - was placed into quarantine prior to receiving the positive test results.
 - was placed into isolation after receiving the positive test results.
 - family was placed into quarantine.
 - is a resident of Otero County.
 - age: 40s
 - is recovering. In fact, according to the patient, "I'm feeling 99% better". We are very happy to hear this!

Our epidemiology investigation into where the patient may have contracted the illness is ongoing.

Crowley/Otero case numbers updates: Our current COVID-19 laboratory-confirmed case counts for Crowley and Otero Counties are as follows (as of the time of this writing Sunday, 4/5/2020):

- ✓ 1-Crowley County case (deceased)
- ✓ 4-Otero County cases
- ✓ TOTAL Crowley/Otero Cases: 5

Colorado numbers updates (Note: this summary only includes data through 4 pm on 4/3/2020 and does not reflect cases since then)

- ✓ 4,565 cases
- ✓ 875 hospitalized
- ✓ 54 counties
- ✓ 23,900 people tested
- ✓ 126 deaths
- ✓ 30 outbreaks at residential and non-hospital health care facilities

Colorado Mask Campaign: This campaign started Friday, 4/3/2020. I have attached a copy of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). It is our responsibility (both mine and yours) to read, understand,

and comply with this guidance, so PLEASE take time to read it and do what it says. We are all in this together. I and my family will not be using surgical/N95 masks, per the recommendation. These are reserved for our Health Care Workers (HCW) that have direct patient access. I will, though, try to be fashionable with my mask (imagine that). On Friday, my wife bought some cloth to make masks, and mine has a Star Wars theme, thanks Jennifer! I will either wear that or my Harley Davidson bandana. As a member of my staff (Tony Harviston) said "it is time to cowboy-up." Have some fun with this!

Local Alternate Care Facility (ACF)

- ✓ What is an ACF?: **If** (please notice I said "if") we have an outbreak locally, OCHD and our great partners are finalizing plans for an Alternate Care Facility (ACF) if it is needed. This will be operationalized if we experience an outbreak and the Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center (AVRMC) is overwhelmed and is in need of assistance. Basically, the way our AFC would work is that AVRMC would transfer their non-critical patients to the AFC, where they would get appropriate medical care. This would enable AVRMC to focus on much more severe, critically ill patients that need much more attention and care (i.e., such as assistance breathing with a ventilator). The ACF will have a direct line of communication with AVRMC. Patients will not report directly to the ACF, they will report to AVRMC where they will receive an initial assessment before possible transfer to the ACF. Once again, this is **NOT NOW**, this is being planned out of an abundance of caution, so that **IF** the need arises, we are ready to assist our regional hospital meet the need.
- ✓ Where are we in planning?: We have a great site selected, in fact, it could not be more perfect; we have medical staff identified; the site has been cleaned and readied; medical beds are in place, and we have access to many more beds if the need arises; start-up supplies have been secured; linens and pillows have been donated; and food service and laundry service is being finalized. A HUGE and SINCERE THANKS to all that have assisted with this important task!

What can you do RIGHT NOW?

- ✓ Read, understand, and comply with public health orders! Public health orders can be found here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/stay-home-except-essential-needs>
- ✓ Stay home if you are sick and, if needed, call your medical provider.
- ✓ Wear an appropriate mask if you must go out for an essential activity.
- ✓ If you are in a high risk group, take extra precautions.
- ✓ Cover your cough and/or sneeze.
- ✓ Keep your fingers and hands away from your face.
- ✓ Wash your hands a lot.
- ✓ Stay informed by trusted and reliable sources. Be careful about believing what you read on social media sites. Trusted sources/websites:
 - OCHD: <https://www.oterogov.com>
 - Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov>
 - CO State Health Department: <https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe>
- ✓ Do these things so you will be prepared, and not scared.

Until next time,

Richard Ritter, Executive Director
Otero County Health Department
13 West 3rd Street, Room 111
La Junta, Colorado 81050

719-383-3045 (Office)
719-383-3060 (Fax)
rritter@otero.gov

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

The information contained in this communication and any attachments hereto is strictly confidential and is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the addressee(s). If you, as the reader of this message, are not an intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, use, distribution, or copying of this communication and any attachment(s) is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately at 719-383-3040 and shred and/or delete the original message.