

[This is an unedited realtime transcript. I am a nationally-certified closed captioner, but this is not a certified transcript, it is to be used for informational purposes only -- Kathy Robson]

>> JASON: All right.

Good morning.

Just like to thank everyone for joining us again, we really appreciate everyone checking in and being here to get the latest information we have to share.

I'm Jason Mahoney, one of the two incident managers for the Carbon County incident management team and also the Carbon County public health emergency preparedness coordinator.

With us today --

>> SHARON: Good morning, Sharon Norby, Beartooth billings clinic.

I'm the chief quality officer, I am an R.N., previous to being in quality and compliance I was the director of nursing.

I've been at Beartooth a little over 21 years.

I am the incident command deputy.

>> JASON: All right.

If you do have questions as we go through this, please go ahead and type them into the comments. Always we go through this, we'll try to get to as many of those as we can.

If we don't have time to get to all of the questions, we'll definitely try to follow up once we're done with this live feed. Once we're done as well, we'll post a recording of in this presentation to Facebook and it will be archived on the website as well as soon as we can get that up.

Also, shortly after the end of this, we should have a transcript from Kathy Robson that will be available.

As far as updates this morning, Montana, we're doing pretty

well.

The measures we're taking seem to be working.

We appreciate everyone doing everything they can to stop the spread of Covid-19.

At this point in Montana we're holding steady at 7 deaths, really wonderful number is that we show 208 people in the state recovered from Covid-19.

We have done just under 10,000 tests, 9936 tests have been administered.

As of this morning, we have 415 cases in the state.

So again we're hoping to see that number start to, the increase slow over time.

But the reason that's happening is because we are being so good with social distancing and following the recommendations and wearing our cloth face coverings and all of that which we truly appreciate everyone helping out with.

If we keep this up we hope to see those numbers really drop off and help us get ready to get past all of this.

Again thanks for all that you're doing there.

In the region, bordering counties -- Wyoming, Clark County, Wyoming as of yesterday afternoon one case.

Bighorn County, Wyoming showing one case.

And 288 total in the state of Wyoming.

There's been a new directive from the governor, for emergency rental assistance.

This directive should help households experiencing substantial financial hardship due to Covid-19.

We're expecting to see the department of commerce will announce details on eligibility for this program by April 17.

It will definitely include relief funds specifically for households with children eligible for the temporary assistance for needy families

program.

And we're also at the state level exploring additional options for families that are not eligible under that program.

At this point the directive is effective through April 24.

We'll just to have wait and see if these directives are extended beyond that point.

Presently in Carbon County we're holding steady at six confirmed cases of Covid-19.

We have one patient recovered already.

And we have five quarantined at this time.

We're holding very steady here.

And, again, really we thank everyone for all of their efforts to keep those numbers low by doing what we have been doing and keeping it up.

We did look at the geography of the cases and if we look at Carbon County and it's broken down by County commissioner districts, generally speaking districts broken down around Joliet, Bridger, and red lodge. Looking at it that way there are cases that affect all three districts.

It is not just a red lodge centric sort of thing.

Really appreciating folks throughout the County keeping up the good work.

Other things going on that we'd really like to tell folks about, red lodge is having a blood drive, that's going to be next Monday, April 20 from 12:00 to 5:30.

It's going to be at the Pub at the Pollard and it's going to be by appointment only.

Rather than me try to read out the details we'll put them in the comments for you so you can look back F you're able to help out and donate blood.

We have procedures in place to make social distancing, it is appropriate for the times, still allow folks to help out those who routinely need the valuable

blood.

Fromberg is hosting one, annual Fromberg national honor society blood drive, going to be on the 23rd of April, from 2:45 to 5:30 in the gym lobby.

We'll post information on that one as well in the comments if you're interested F you're able to please help support the blood drives.

We'll move on to you.

>> SHARON: Thanks, Jason.

So Beartooth wanted to give you a little bit of information about how we prepare for an incident or event.

So quite a few years ago we were lucky to be part of the community readiness grant that involves emergency preparedness collaboration with public health in the County.

Using it, we've been using an incident command structure for several years and many of us have been fortunate to go to Alabama to do that formal training.

This is a national structure used for incidents regardless of the type of event.

So it gives you that common structure and language that provides that ability to collaborate no matter what type of event you have.

So we have done quite a few live events and drills just to make sure we're ready and we can collaborate.

Most importantly, I want you to know that Beartooth billings clinic is open for business, we are available to treat Covid and nonCovid patients.

Mostly I want to remind you not to ignore any acute or emergent situations.

Don't ignore the chest pain, stroke symptoms, severe abdominal pain, the nausea, vomiting, fever, don't ignore those.

Make sure that you come to the hospital.

We just really encourage to you

call ahead of time so that we know you're coming and we can be prepared.

Over the last few weeks we've begun doing more telephone conversations with patients, the providers have been doing that, and this last week we expanded that to the TELE-health or TELE-conference visits where it's a live view between the patient and provider.

What we do with those is the clinical staff connect ahead of time with the patient to assist them with whatever computer or phone APP they might need to be able to make that happen.

We want you to be aware that the insurance companies are recognizing and paying for those types of visits.

Please don't hesitate to make an appointment if you feel you need to be seen or address an issue. The prescription refills at that time are being extended so that people aren't having to come just for refills.

We are also holding wellness type visits and exams.

But I would encourage you to call and make an appointment for a few weeks from now if you're due for a wellness exam so we can make sure that we're keeping track of all of our patients.

If you're due for an immunization we're still doing those so please call ahead.

If the weather is nice we may have a nurse come out and actually just see new your car to get your immunizations done but we don't want people to get behind on getting immunizations done.

For those patients who have regular blood draws, we are continuing to do those right now we've limited the hours to Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 8:00 until noon.

Again, please call ahead so we can do the screening.

And either we'll do your blood draw curbside in your vehicle or

in the vestibule depending upon the weather.

Like today we would do it in the vestibule.

Please don't get behind on those either.

I want to talk a little bit about all of the protective and control measures that we've done at Beartooth.

The safe work practices we have in place.

Again, I said you know encourage people to call ahead so we know when you're coming.

We have consistent screening guidelines that we use for all of our patients.

We ask that all patients entering the building wear a mask.

As far as employees, we get screened every day when we come to work.

We're evaluated for the symptoms and we do temperature checks to make sure we're not running a fever.

We use hand sanitizer upon entry and we use, do use masks as appropriate for source control and protection.

As far as visitors, they're very limited right now to either a past or guardian accompanying a patient, we're working hard on the original distancing in the facility as well -- we're doing it with the public as well.

There have been some questions about sort of the negative pressure areas or isolation rooms we have at Beartooth.

Basically what that does is the airflow keeps those potentially harmful particles within the negative pressure room or space, so that internal air does not go out into other spaces and protects everyone outside the room from that exposure.

At Beartooth we have one in-patient room that is negative pressure as well as two exam rooms and our emergency room hallway are negative pressure. We have those capabilities at

Beartooth.

As far as P.P.E. supplies we're continuing with ongoing work with our vendors to maintain adequate personal protective equipment, the gloves, mask, gowns, face shields.

We have never been without adequate P.P.E. at Beartooth. It's been a little scarce but we've never been without.

We have not had an employee exposure due to the lack of personal protective equipment, I want to assure you that we have adequate supplies.

Currently we're accepting P.P.E. and medical supply donations from the public.

The dropoff point is the front door of Beartooth Monday through Friday from 7:00A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

That would include masks, gloves, face shields, gowns, other various medical supplies. We thank you for the people who have already donated to Beartooth.

A little bit about just the testing for Covid.

To date we have tested 95 patients through Beartooth.

The tests are being limited at this time to patients with symptoms.

The test has to be ordered by a provider.

Then the specimen is collected at Beartooth.

There's a courier service that takes to it billings clinic then on to the state lab in Helena every day.

The turnaround time is between 24 and 48 hours.

Just depending upon how many tests they receive every day.

Currently we have no ability to do rapid testing or antibody testing at Beartooth.

There's lots of research going on right now about which type of testing that will provide the best accurate results.

And the availability of those testing supplies for new units

is really limited right now.

So we don't know when we will be able to do other testing besides what we're doing right now.

Another piece of the incident command planning is when we call surge planning.

That really is dependent on the type of event, and that is how we determine the maximum patient capacity and our ability to safely manage any influx of patients.

If we have an influx of patients obviously our staffing needs increase and would require us to look for additional medical professionals who are not working at present.

Beartooth at this time is looking for all levels of medical professionals, typically those are retired individuals that might live in the area.

And there's two ways to reach out if you're interested in maybe providing help to us if we would need it.

You can either contact H.R. at Beartooth billings clinic, there will be an ad that will run in the paper again today, or the other way to do that is to go on the Montana healthcare mutual aid system to register.

Neither one of those, you're not only gated to respond at the time of the need.

It's just right now for us to gather the list of people that might be available.

There is a process to renew lapsed or expired licenses if you wanted to go that route.

At the time we would do very basic just in time training for those personnel and then pair them up with current staff to be able to provide safe patient care.

So thank you.

>> Jason: All right as we get close to the end we'll touch on recovery a little bit.

As we start to we believe some of the numbers start to level off, we know we're not going to

stop doing what we've been doing but we are at this point really starting to look ahead to see what it's going to look like as we try to return to our new normal, how we'll recover from this, how we'll start to reopen businesses and get back to normal.

That will be probably a long process but we want everyone to know that we have started those conversations.

That sort of planning.

We're pulling together a group that will try to work together to figure out the best way to do that in a controlled manner that will keep everyone as safe as possible and still once we reach that point allow us to get back to normal.

We will be definitely doing that in cooperation with surrounding counties, especially Yellowstone County, and more, there will be more to come on that as we move through that process.

Do we have any time for questions really quick?

>> Yes.

Do you have any questions?

>> I don't, I'm not seeing questions.

You may need to check into that.

>> I am not seeing any questions either.

So I guess at this time do you guys have any last words for wrapping up, encouraging people to keep doing what they're doing wearing masks in public and all of that good stuff?

>> JASON: Absolutely.

I have no problem saying that all again.

Number one, thank you for helping us and helping each other, helping the community.

By doing what we need to do right now, staying home, only going out for essential needs, wearing your cloth face coverings, all of those measures that Carbon County has been so good at, please stay the course, hang in for a little bit longer,

we will keep these numbers down and move towards returning to normal hopefully very soon.

For now stick with it.

All right, now, with that, we've come to the end of our time for now.

>> We will be back at the -- next week, at the same time, same place, and look forward to giving you updates at that time.

>> JASON: Thank you again and stay safe and healthy, have a great day.