Weekly COVID-19 Update from the CEO

April 23, 2020

It has been a month since we shut down several of our businesses, laid off and furloughed many workers, and asked remaining staff to work remotely. Since then, much has changed. Trillions of dollars in relief funding has been approved by Congress, and each funding source has rushed to create application criteria and forms. As funding sources become available to support our COVID-19 response efforts, we have been actively applying for them on behalf of the Tribe. So far, we have received support for our medical personnel, Elder’s meal deliver program, Tribal food bank, law enforcement & public safety, victims services, COVID-19 communications, and our general self-governance. Relief funds have come from a range of agencies that include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Indian Health Services, Department of Justice, WA State Department of Commerce, WA Department of Health, and inter-Tribal organizations. While there is a long way to go in our response and recovery, Jamestown staff is working hard to ensure we have access to the resources we need. We are not called “the Strong People” for nothing and we will get through this!

Return to Normal will be in measured steps
In an address to the State on April 21st, Washington Governor Jay Inslee said it is unlikely many restrictions under the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order will be modified before May 4. Rather, a framework for the loosening of restrictions is contingent on a steady decrease of the spread of COVID-19. The return to public life will occur in measured steps. It will be guided by science and informed by our public health needs (including adequate testing and tracing those who come into contact with anyone who tests positive), our ability to mitigate impacts, and the response of Washington communities. Our local Public Health Officials agree with this approach and will be loosening restrictions accordingly.

JFHC has received an Abbott ID NOW COVID-19 test machine from IHS.
This is a Point of Care diagnostic tool which will allow JFHC to perform on-site testing of our patients, with results back in under 20 minutes. We plan to use this machine at the JFHC Respiratory Clinic. The criteria for access to testing is the same as we currently use. The testing machine is not designed for mass screening or for testing asymptomatic patients, rather it is for front-line health care workers and those showing flu symptoms. It will prove particularly helpful for anyone with symptoms who tests positive, in that they will have test results at the time of their visit and can be counseled accordingly. Results will be reported to public health officials so that appropriate contact tracing can be completed. As the sensitivity (ability to detect COVID-19 virus infection) of the test is not yet established, a negative test result needs to be carefully interpreted within the context of the patient’s symptoms and exposure history. Patients for whom
there is high clinical suspicion for COVID-19 infection, but test negative may need a second test sent off to OMC and will still be directed to quarantine themselves while any concerning symptoms resolve. Additionally, we are reaching out to our partners at OMC and Clallam County Department of Health about how we might extend this testing to appropriate individuals who are not JFHC patients or employees. We will offer updates on this resource as we gain more experience.

Websites where you can go to, or direct others to, for additional information:
- Clallam County Volunteers website: https://timecounts.org/clallamcert
- Olympic Agency on Aging https://www.o3a.org/
- Clallam Transit scaled back their service starting Thursday, April 16. Please check their website for detailed information. https://www.clallamtransit.com/
- Peninsula Behavioral Health https://peninsulabehavioral.org/
- Washington Health Plan Finder: https://www.wahealthplanfinder.org/.
- Washington Connection offers a fast and easy way for families and individuals to apply for a variety of services such as Food, Cash, Childcare, Long-Term Care and Medicare Savings Programs. https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/

Stay well,

W. Ron Allen, Council Chair/CEO