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Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2021

State allocates more than \$18 million to hospitals for COVID-19 relief

Using federal COVID-19 relief funds, the state of Iowa allocated \$18.5 million to provide financial assistance to hospitals in response to increased costs from the pandemic. Eligible hospitals can use the Iowa Hospital COVID-19 Relief allocations to pay for:

- Quarantine or closures related to COVID-19.
- Supplies necessary for COVID-19 response like PPE, plexiglass, sanitizer and signage.
- Workforce-related expenses caused by the pandemic.

Entities eligible to receive funds are Iowa hospitals licensed as “general” or “long-term acute care” according to Iowa Code chapter 135B.

Click [HERE](#) for a FAQ about the funds.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of relief funds allocated by Iowa hospital.

Click [HERE](#) for the relief fund application and instructions.

For more information:

- Visit the [US Treasury's Guidance and FAQ on the Coronavirus Relief Fund](#).
- Click [HERE](#) for a webinar hosted by the Governor's Office and IEDA.

IHA has been advocating for support for Iowa hospitals as they continue to work on the front lines of the ongoing pandemic. IHA would like to thank Gov. Kim Reynolds for listening to the concerns of Iowa hospitals and providing this much-needed financial support.

Questions about the program can be emailed to [Jen Nutt](#) at IHA.

Supplemental bed capacity through VA system launched

In cooperation with the VA medical system and the Iowa Department of Public Health,

the regional medical coordination centers (RMCC) are launching a supplemental bed capacity initiative through the VA medical system. Nonbeneficiary patients, both COVID-19 positive and non-COVID-19, are eligible to use a limited number of medical-surgical and ICU beds through the VA medical system **during business hours only**. Iowa hospitals that have exhausted their options for transfer including within their respective RMCC and statewide can request a VA bed for a nonbeneficiary patient. The VA does not accept pediatric or OB/GYN patients.

The process is:

- Hospitals will work with their respective RMCC contact to exhaust placement options.
- If placement options are exhausted, the RMCC contact will reach out to the state bed coordinators.
- The state bed coordinators will work directly with the VA medical centers to determine bed availability.
- The transferring hospital must provide a 24-hour administrator on-call number to the state bed coordinator to complete and accept the terms of transfer.
- Physician-to-physician acceptance for transfer must happen after confirmation of bed availability.

The terms of transfer for the transferring facility are:

- Assure no other facility resource is available for the patient's care.
- Be responsible for coordinating care and communication to the VA facility medical staff.
- Assume responsibility for transporting nonbeneficiary patients to the VA facility.
- Accept the return travel for any transferred patient discharged from the VA.
- Assure long-term care arrangements for discharged patients from the VA, if needed.
- Help the VA with required case management/social work on discharge from the VA.
- Assign a case manager to coordinate with the VA case manager to coordinate decedent care for any transferred patients who die, including the transfer of remains back to the home site of the patient.

The transfer process is being piloted now for coordination and process improvement. More information will be available as the process is solidified and further rolled out. Please email questions to margot.mccomas@idph.iowa.gov, brent.spear@idph.iowa.gov or rebecca.curtiss@idph.iowa.gov.

State alters COVID-19 testing program

IDPH, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the State Hygienic Lab are adjusting the state's COVID-19 testing approach to provide Iowans convenient and free access.

The recently launched [testing locator map](#) helps Iowans find testing near them by entering a city or ZIP code. The map includes all Test Iowa test kit pickup sites and

locations where in-person testing is available. The tool also includes an overview of the types of tests offered and associated costs. The testing locator will be updated regularly as more locations are submitted by providers.

To provide more timely results to symptomatic Iowans, seven Test Iowa pickup sites also will provide same day delivery to the State Hygienic Lab. This change is being made to expedite test processing. Samples dropped off Monday-Friday will be collected and delivered daily to the State Hygienic Lab by a contracted courier service. Test Iowa pickup and drop-off sites with same-day delivery to the State Hygienic Lab are:

- Black Hawk County: Peoples Community Health Clinic, 905 Franklin St., Waterloo
- Johnson County Public Health: 855 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City
- Linn County Public Health: 1020 Sixth St. SE, Cedar Rapids
- Polk County Public Health: 1907 Carpenter, Des Moines
- Pottawattamie County Public Health: 600 S. Fourth St., Council Bluffs
- Scott County Public Health: 600 W. Fourth St., Davenport
- Woodbury County, Siouxland District Health Department: 1014 Nebraska St., Sioux City

Visit [Test Iowa](#) for details. Test results will be emailed within 24 hours of the lab receiving an activated test kit. Hours and drop-off times vary by site. Review sites drop-off hours at Test Iowa to ensure same-day delivery to the lab.

To ensure Iowa's health care resources are available for those who need care, IDPH recommends Iowans consider the following testing options based on their circumstances:

- Iowans seeking testing for travel or other purposes should buy a home test kit from a retailer or pharmacy or schedule an appointment at a local pharmacy.
- Iowans with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or those who have been exposed to a COVID-19-positive person should seek testing in a health care setting or use Test Iowa at home.
- People experiencing severe symptoms or those at high risk of serious illness should seek medical care.

IDPH updates COVID-19 vaccine information brief, releases booster-third dose infographic

IDPH has released an [updated COVID-19 vaccine information brief](#). The document also is posted to the HAN *3 COVID-19 vaccine folder. Call the Immunization Program with questions at 800-831-6293, ext.1.

IDPH also is making available an educational [COVID-19 vaccine infographic](#) about boosters versus third-dose vaccine recommendations. The infographic is posted to the HAN *3 COVID-19 vaccine/communications and social media folder. Call the Immunization Program with questions.

Vaccinations up but unvaccinated continue to account for most hospitalizations

According to IDPH, between 75%-80% of lowans recently hospitalized because of COVID-19 were unvaccinated when they became infected, and 80-90% of those admitted to an intensive care unit were unvaccinated.

The number of vaccinated lowans continues to grow. According to the CDC, 71% of lowans 18 and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine, and nearly 69% of Iowa's total vaccine-eligible population, which includes those 12 and older, have received at least one dose. Lowans 65 and older have achieved the highest vaccination rate at 92%.

These figures also underscore how essential it is for all eligible lowans to get vaccinated for COVID-19 and the flu. Being vaccinated for both can prevent avoidable hospitalizations and help preserve health care resources for other needs, including illnesses, injuries and emergencies.

Regeneron repackaging includes some errors

Regeneron has recently made changes to its packaging of REGEN-COV, and some packages have been distributed with incorrect labeling for the number of courses of treatment contained in the package. See [the image at the end of this announcement](#) for an example and the [REGEN-COV](#) website for additional information about packaging.

Considerations with Regeneron include:

- After the product has been diluted (for IV infusion) or prepared in a syringe (for SQ administration), it should be used immediately. If the product cannot be administered immediately, the prepared infusion solution can be stored for up to 36 hours refrigerated or for four hours at room temperature or the prepared syringes can be stored for up to four hours refrigerated or at room temperature.
- Do not discard vials of product without verifying the supply has been used.
- Do not simply withdraw the entire contents of a vial without verifying the volume.
- On receipt of REGEN-COV, visually inspect the product to identify the complete courses of treatment received.
- Under the [emergency-use authorization](#), a full course of REGEN-COV is 5ml each of Casirivimab and imdevimab (or 10ml of a co-formulated product).
- Weekly allocations are based on courses of treatment. What you receive may be fewer vials than expected because of the packaging change.

Educational opportunity

[Making Your HVAC Systems Pandemic Ready with Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization](#)

1:30-2:30 pm, Tuesday, Oct. 26. Needlepoint bipolar ionization reduces particles, kills mold and bacteria, and inactivates viruses. The system is also very effective at coil cleaning and odor/VOC mitigation by disassociating the compound into its component elements.



Click here for the latest
COVID-19
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