Maine continues to prepare for coronavirus

February 27, 2020

Steps include updating equipment and protocols, working with partners statewide

AUGUSTA – The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) today outlined steps that Maine is taking to prepare for the potential spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus to the state.

Maine currently has no confirmed cases of the 2019 novel coronavirus. As Maine CDC previously reported, one individual in Maine who met federal requirements to be tested for the virus tested negative (//www.maine.gov/dhhs/press-release.shtml?id=2118828) . The risk to the public remains low, and Maine CDC continues comprehensive planning to ensure Maine is ready should the virus affect people here.

"As federal public health officials inform us that the disease is likely to spread further in the U.S., we're working diligently to ensure that we're prepared," **said Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew**. "Protecting the health of Maine people is our job and we're working with our partners throughout the state to take appropriate measures."

Maine CDC has proactively prepared for potential cases of the 2019 novel coronavirus since the start of the outbreak in December 2019. Dozens of Maine CDC staff members have been working on coronavirus response precautions, focusing on ensuring that potential cases are rapidly identified and investigated and that isolation procedures are in place, if needed. Specific preparedness actions include ensuring adequate supplies of personal protective equipment for health care workers and first responders, 24-7 consultations with our public health professionals, and adjusting emergency response protocols to adapt to the 2019 novel coronavirus. Maine CDC is also updating lab equipment to enable testing for the coronavirus and engaging public health nurses as part of our emergency preparedness team, among other measures.

Additionally, Maine CDC conducted a multiagency pandemic response drill in November, before the outbreak was declared, as part of our ongoing preparedness work.

Maine CDC is taking steps every day to make sure partners throughout the state, including health care systems, first responders, schools (//mainedoenews.net/2020/02/26/priority-notice-reminders-for-school-communities-regarding-the-2019-novel-coronavirus/) and local health departments, have the information, resources, and supplies they need. This includes sharing and presenting the latest U.S. CDC guidance.

"The risk to the public remains low, but we must prepare for the potential spread of coronavirus," **said Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine CDC**. "As we focus on the health of the public, we urge Maine people to take care of their personal health. Eat well, get plenty of sleep, and practice good hygiene. Healthy habits save lives."

The best thing that Maine people can do to protect their health is to take the same preventive measures that help to avoid catching a cold: Wash your hands often. Cover coughs and sneezes. Stay home if you are sick.

We urge Maine people to seek out credible resources, such as the Maine CDC's coronavirus page (//www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml) , which will continue to be updated as new information becomes available.

Maine CDC remains committed to providing accurate, up-to-date information about the 2019 novel coronavirus to Maine people.

Credit

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