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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Increased Resources For Health Care Providers, Expanded Support For Long-Term Care Facilities, COVID-19 Testing Initiatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

4/07/2020

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Governor's Press Office

Department of Public Health

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BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced a new financial package to support providers through the MassHealth program. The Administration also announced new resources to support older adults living in long-term care facilities and their families, including a Nursing Home Mobile Testing Program and a Nursing Home Family Resource Line. Earlier today, the Administration and CVS announced a new rapid-testing site in Lowell.

MassHealth Financial Resources: The Baker-Polito Administration has announced a new infusion of $800 million at MassHealth in critical stabilization funding to support health care providers impacted by and responding to COVID-19. Health care providers across the Commonwealth have stepped up in unprecedented ways in the past few weeks while experiencing a significant impact on their revenue and operations. This funding will support hospitals, nursing facilities, primary care providers, behavioral health providers, and long-term services and supports providers and will be distributed starting this month and through July. This funding is in addition to the $290 million in immediate cash relief and $550 million in accelerated payments to providers announced in March. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation.

These resources include:

- More than $400 million to hospitals
    - The majority of this funding will support 28 safety net and high-Medicaid hospitals, to address lost revenue and increased costs for hospitals at the front lines of treating patients with COVID-19

    - This includes a 20% rate increase for COVID-19 care, as well as a 7.5% across-the-board rate increase for other hospital care

- More than $80 million for Nursing Facilities
    - $50 million will be dedicated funding for all nursing facilities across the state
    - Facilities and units within nursing facilities that are designated COVID-19 sites of care will receive approximately $30 million in additional funding to support their capacity to care for COVID-19 patients

- More than $300 million for other health care providers that are delivering medical care for COVID-19 or providing services that keep residents safe in their homes and out of the hospital, including:
    - More than $50 million for community health centers
    - Around $30 million for personal care attendants
    - Funding for ambulance providers physicians, community behavioral health providers, and Home Health Agencies
    - Funding for certain long-term services and supports day programs such as Adult Day Health or Day Habilitation programs that have converted from group programs to actively serving members via alternative means

Nursing Home Mobile Testing Program: Building on efforts to protect high-risk populations like older adults, the Baker-Polito Administration has launched a program to allow for safe, rapid on-site testing of residents of long-term care facilities like nursing homes and rest homes. The initiative is being completed as a partnership between the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Massachusetts National Guard and the testing being conducted by the BROAD institute. So far, the National Guard has been deployed to 80 facilities across the state and has completed more than 1,300 tests since this program started last week. Starting yesterday, DPH worked to expand the program by providing an option for places to use their on-site medical personnel to collect specimens and send them to the state lab for testing. Today, DPH issued new guidance to nursing homes and rest homes with recommendations aimed at protecting the health of residents and health care workers and mitigating the risk of transmission of COVID-19, both inside and outside of these facilities.

Nursing Home Resource Line: The Baker-Polito Administration also announced the launch of a new Nursing Home Family Resource Line, a dedicated telephone line that will connect family members of nursing home and rest home residents with the information and resources they need. This resource was created so that family and community members have one central contact that they can reach out to if they have questions or concerns about the care their loved one is receiving during the COVID-19 outbreak. The line is staffed from 9 AM – 5 PM, seven days a week. Staff will coordinate across state agencies to help callers find answers to their questions.

Families and community members can call the line at (617) 660-5399.

New CVS Rapid Testing Site: Earlier today, the Baker-Polito Administration and CVS announced the launch of a new rapid testing site in Lowell, which will enable on-the-spot COVID-19 testing and results at no cost. The new CVS site in Lowell will use the new Abbott ID NOW™ COVID-19 test. With the launch of this site,

Massachusetts is the third state where CVS has launched rapid testing sites, joining Georgia and Rhode Island. CVS Health will be transitioning its efforts to support COVID-19 testing in Mass. to the Lowell location, which allows for up to 1,000 patients to be tested per day and receive results on-site so they can properly quarantine or seek treatment as appropriate. As a result, the company will be halting COVID-19 testing at the original Shrewsbury pilot testing site. Similar to the CVS rapid COVID-19 test sites in Georgiaand Rhode Island, testing at the Lowell site will be overseen by licensed health care providers from MinuteClinic, the retail medical clinic of CVS Health. Patients will need to pre-register in advance online at **CVS.com** (https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing) in order to schedule a same-day time slot for testing.

Read More (/news/baker-polito-administration-cvs-announce-expansion-of-rapid-covid-19-drive-through-testing-in)

The Baker-Polito Administration will continue to update the public on developments related to COVID-19. Residents can visit **www.mass.gov/covid19** (/covid19) for the latest information, call 2-1-1 with questions, and text "COVIDMA" to 888-777 to subscribe to text-alert updates.

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito
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The Executive Office of Health and Human Services is the largest secretariat in state government and is comprised of 12 agencies, in addition to 2 soldiers’ homes and the MassHealth program. Our efforts are focused on the health, resilience, and independence of the one in four residents of the Commonwealth we serve. Our public health programs touch every community in the Commonwealth.

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