News Release

Gov. Ricketts, DHHS Announce Online Resource To Recruit Nurses To Health Care Openings

For Immediate Release: 11/10/2020

Media Contacts:
Taylor Gage, (402) 471-1970
Justin Pinkerman, (402) 471-1967

Governor's *Media Release:*

LINCOLN – This afternoon, Governor Pete Ricketts announced a new online resource to connect nurses and nurse assistants with health care facilities in Nebraska that have staffing needs.

Dr. Gary Anthone, the State's Chief Medical Officer, joined the Governor to highlight the webpage, which is on the Nebraska Center for Nursing website. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Chief Data Strategist Ashley Newmyer also participated in the press conference to overview the State's contact tracing efforts.

Additionally, the Governor gave an update on the State's Coronavirus Relief Fund grant programs. On October 19th, Gov. Ricketts had announced the opening of grant programs to assist businesses, non-profits, and care

providers affected by the pandemic. Some of these programs have now stopped accepting applications, but others—such as stabilization grants for hotels and convention centers—remain open. Nebraskans interested in applying can visit coronavirus.nebraska.gov.

Dr. Gary Anthone: Online Nursing Center Resource

- We've seen an increase in hospitalizations recently, which has placed additional stress on our health care professionals.
- A couple of weeks ago, the State allocated an extra $40 million to hospitals throughout Nebraska to help them increase staffing.
    - I'm hearing from hospital CEOs and CMOs that this has successfully added to their capacity to staff beds in their facilities.
- DHHS worked collaboratively with several partners on the development of an online resource to connect nursing assistants and nurses with facilities in Nebraska that have critical staffing needs. The webpage is center4nursing.nebraska.gov/covid19-resources.
- The webpage serves as a central location where nursing assistants and registered nurses can find information on opportunities to provide assistance during the pandemic.
- Nursing students can also take advantage of this opportunity.
- All of the health care facilities participating on the website will provide training and orientation for any new hires.
- Nebraska health care facilities that would like to list opportunities on the website can contact Ann Oertwich by calling (402) 471-0317 or by emailing ann.oertwich@nebraska.gov.
- The following partners were involved in creating the online resource:
    - The Nebraska Center for Nursing
    - The Nebraska Assembly of Nursing Deans and Directors, which represents 17 schools of nursing.
    - LeadingAge Nebraska

    - The Nebraska Health Care Association
- Thank you to everyone who helped to make this resource available.

Ashley Newmyer: Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing is an important tool to slow the spread of the coronavirus.
- Contact tracing starts with a positive test result being reported to the state or local health department. Next, a trained contact tracer calls the person who received a positive test. The contact tracer asks about what symptoms they may be experiencing, if they know where and when they were exposed, as well as who they were in close contact with during the few days prior to their onset of symptoms or positive test result.
- Over an eight-week period, starting September 6th, the number of cases handled by DHHS contact tracers increased nearly four times.
- For the week of September 6th, 82% of the 750 case interviews handled by DHHS were completed within 48 hours of the positive test result being reported.
- For the week ending October 31st, 85% of the 2,961 case interviews were completed within 48 hours of the positive test result being reported.
- Even with a nearly fourfold increase in the number of cases handled since early September, the State's contact tracers have been able to increase the percentage of case interviews completed within 48 hours.
- If you receive a call from your Local Health Department or a Lincoln number, it is important to answer. In order to improve the timeliness of contacting those who are positive, the DHHS contact tracers call those persons every 2-3 hours until they are able to speak to them.
- Completing your interview with a contact tracer is one way that Nebraskans can be responsible in helping to protect our hospital capacity and slow the transmission of the virus.

Governor Ricketts: Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant Programs

- Of the $10 billion of federal coronavirus assistance that has come to Nebraska, $1.084 billion of CARES Act funds came directly to the State of Nebraska for allocation.
- On October 19th, we announced new grants funded through the CARES Act assistance.
- Grant applications remain open for the following programs:
  - Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) Programs:
    - Hotel & Convention Centers Stabilization Program
    - Event Centers & Sports Arenas Stabilization Program
    - Movie Theatre Stabilization Program
  - DHHS Programs
    - Stabilization Grant for Charitable Organizations & Licensed Providers
- The following grant programs have now closed and are no longer accepting applications:
  - DED Programs
    - Small Business Stabilization Program
    - Livestock Producers Stabilization Program
    - Restaurants & Bars Stabilization Program
    - Licensed Personal Service Business Stabilization Program
  - DHHS Program
    - Healthy Places Grant for Centers of Worship
- To apply for open grant programs, go to coronavirus.nebraska.gov. For application assistance, call 1-833-500-8810 between 7am and 7pm CT (Monday through Friday).

Video from this afternoon's press conference is available by clicking here.

Go to
All News Releases

© 2021 Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

301 Centennial Mall South,
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

(402) 471-3121

Contact Us

For Latest Updates : Sign Up

- Careers
- Security, Privacy & Accessibility Policy
- Non Discrimination Notice
- General Disclaimer

Helping People Live Better Lives