HEALTHCARE COUNCIL REGIONAL COVID-19 UPDATE

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As we turn the calendar page to a new month, the Healthcare Council continues to do our part to keep you updated on issues relevant to the coronavirus pandemic and how those issues affect healthcare facilities in our region.

We work with local organizations to help with supply needs through our ShareSource (formerly NCASS) division. Please contact us directly at **301-731-4700** if there are ways we can help you get the supplies you need.

Guidelines, Information, and Policies Updates:

➢ Regional COVID-19 update: After sharp declines in case numbers in early June, the number of known cases in all three jurisdictions plateaued before rising steadily in July. The recent surge in both Maryland and Virginia appears to have leveled off in recent days, but Virginia's positivity rate crept up from a low of 5.8 percent in late June to 7.7 percent in the third week of July. Full local details from the Washington Post.

➢ CMS has announced a new temporary policy for premium reductions. Details of the new policy can be found here.

➢ Patients admitted with COVID-19 at select hospitals may now volunteer to enroll in a clinical trial to test the safety and efficacy of a potential new treatment for the disease. This is part of a new clinical study launched by the NIH to test antibody treatment in hospitalized COVID-19 patients. Details on the study here.

➢ Six governors – including the governors of Maryland and Virginia – have formed a first-of-its-kind purchasing compact they hope will pressure companies that make rapid-detection tests to quickly ramp up production. Details found here.

➢ The White House released an Executive Order on improving rural health and telehealth access. Read the AHA Special Bulletin for details.

➢ More broadly, President Trump also signed an executive order on Monday seeking to expand the use of virtual doctor's visits. Full story here.

➢ Finally – as it relates to telehealth and virtual medical care – here are some of the emerging legal issues associated with those practices. More information found here.

➢ Just like hospitals and health systems, physicians are taking a significant financial hit from COVID-19 and it may result in a rise in physician practice acquisition and consolidation as well as changes in physician compensation plans. Full story and analysis.

➢ COVID-19 has put ICU beds in the spotlight. According to a study in Health Affairs, nearly half of low-income communities where the median income is under $35,000 have no access to intensive care unit beds, compared to 3 percent of communities with a median income over $90,000. Full story here.

➢ The Food and Drug Administration is considering emergency use authorization for antibody-rich plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients, potentially paving the way for quicker and more widespread access to one of the more encouraging coronavirus treatments. A decision could come as soon as next week. Details can be found here.

Education, Learning, and Resources

A look at some of the upcoming meetings and webinars in the week ahead.

➢ AHA has a number of webinars of various topics during the month of August. [Click here to access a web or mobile friendly version](#).

General Information and Data Sources:
Resources for National and Regional Up-to-the-Minute Data and Information:

➢ [Johns Hopkins University global COVID-19 Tracker](#)

➢ Latest Case data for each state can be found at these websites:
- [Maryland](#)
- [Virginia](#)
- [District of Columbia](#)
- [West Virginia](#)

➢ State Hospital Association information can be found at these websites:
- [Maryland Hospital Association](#)
- [Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association](#)
- [DC Hospital Association](#)
- [West Virginia Hospital Association](#)

➢ [Morning Consult Resource Page](#)