

## NEWS RELEASE



### CONTACT:

RHEA BASA | MORRILL COUNTY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL  
308.262.1616 | basar@morrillcountyhospital.org

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2020

Bridgeport, NE (April 29, 2020) – Thank you to everyone for maintaining the social distancing guidelines while we flatten the curve against coronavirus. While everyone has remained socially distant, we have been busy preparing our hospital with negative pressure rooms, equipment and training. We know emergencies still happen, if you have chest pain, loss of mobility or can't breathe, please don't stay home. Call 911. Our Emergency room is ready to take care of you 24/7.

Our facility is dedicated to keeping our patients and community safe. In response to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome–Novel Coronavirus 2—2019 (COVID-19) we have implemented the following processes to ensure safety for all that pass through our doors.

- **Screening:** Before entering our facility everyone is screened, this includes every staff member, patient, visitor and vendor. We are constantly monitoring the developing situation to be sure we are checking for all appropriate symptoms that may occur with COVID-19. Upon arrival at our facility you can expect to have your temperature taken and be asked several questions. Please be honest in answering these questions, they're the first line of defense in keeping you, and everyone else, safe! As you move through our facility you can be confident in knowing that no one you see in the waiting room or pass in the hallway is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Divided Care Areas:** After screening anyone presenting to our facility for care will be separated based on their COVID screen. Any patients presenting with COVID-19 like symptoms will be placed in our Respiratory Care Unit. Patients presenting with condition unlike COVID-19 will be seen in our normal Emergency Department. These two areas have independent airflow \ and separate staffing to avoid the risk of cross contamination.
- **Masking:** Everyone entering our facility will be wearing a mask. Any healthcare provider you see will be wearing a surgical or procedure mask. All staff that do not participate in patient care will be wearing a cloth mask. All patients, visitors and vendors will be supplied with a mask if they do not have one of their own. We know that many people who are spreading COVID-19 are not sick when they become contagious. By ensuring everyone is wearing a mask we can decrease the likelihood of spreading COVID-19 in our facility and community. While wearing a mask is not a reason to stop social distancing or handwashing it is another tool in our toolkit.
- **Housekeeping:** Our housekeeping department is consistently trained on effective cleaning methods for our facility. We only use chemicals approved by the Environmental Protection Agency to kill COVID-19. The facility is cleaned routinely multiple times daily with special attention paid to high touch surfaces.
- **Practice:** Our staff is run through multiple scenarios daily to practice our facility response to patients that may have COVID-19. Staff religiously practices putting on and taking Personal

Protective Equipment and stepping through the processes of caring for a patient in our Respiratory Care Unit. Staff practices decontamination to ensure that any contamination that they may have been exposed to is not spread outside the Respiratory Care Unit

### MCCH CLINICAL LABORATORY UPDATE

A serology test can provide a broader picture of the CoVID-19 virus such as if someone has been previously infected and how long antibodies stay in the body. Recent published findings on patients admitted to the hospital with confirmed CoVID-19 infection indicated that the median time to seroconversion was 11–14 days. It is not known for certain whether individuals infected with CoVID-19 who subsequently recover will be protected, either fully or partially, from future infection with CoVID-19 or how long protective immunity may last. Therefore, it is important to understand the presence of antibodies to better manage patient care.

Morrill County Community Hospital is happy to announce the availability of the Abbott Architect CoVID-19 IgG Antibody Test. The test is available through our health care providers in both Morrill County Hospital Clinic in Bridgeport, Chimney Rock Medical Center in Bayard or perhaps through workplaces. It analyzes blood that's drawn from patient and looks for the telltale antibodies that a body's immune system creates to defend against the corona virus known as SARS-CoV-2. The IgG antibody test isn't suitable for people who are just coming down with CoVID-19. It takes about 11 to 14 days for antibodies to develop, and the longer a person waits the better.

The test assay performed at the MCCH-Clinical Laboratory is a chemiluminescent microparticle immunoassay (CMIA) performed on the Abbott's Architect ci41000 system, a high-throughput medical laboratory analyzer which can produce over 2,400 results in 24 hours, with a 29 minute time to first result. MCCH-Clinical Laboratory's internal study, involving patient samples from a University Medical Center in New York, had a total agreement (positive/negative), sensitivity and specificity of 100%. This means that the methodology is almost always able to distinguish between SARS-CoV-2 and other viruses.

To schedule an appointment, please call Morrill County Hospital Clinic 308-262-1755 or call our Clinical Laboratory for more inquiries at 308-262-1616 ext 237.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** This test is allowed to be marketed under policy D of the FDA *Policy for Diagnostic Tests for Coronavirus Disease 2019 during the Public Health Emergency; Immediately in Effect Guidance for Clinical Laboratories, Commercial Manufacturers, and Food and Drug Administration Staff* document issued March 16, 2020. Please note the following information:

- This assay is approved by the FDA for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).
- Negative results do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infection, particularly in those who have been in contact with the virus. Follow-up testing with a molecular diagnostic should be considered to rule out infection in these individuals.
- Results from antibody testing should not be used as the sole basis to diagnose or exclude SARS-CoV-2 infection or to inform infection status.
- Positive results may be due to past or present infection with non-SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus strains, such as coronavirus HKU1, NL63, OC43, or 229E.
- Not for the screening of donated blood.

We thank you for your cooperation through this trying time. Have faith that we are here to serve the community in this time of need!

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