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June 3, 2020

To Hospital Providers:

Given the impact the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have on your hurricane preparedness plans, please take action now to verify contracts, confirm arrangements for services and evacuation plans, and modify your plans to address COVID-19 risks for your patients and others. Hurricane Season began on June 1, 2020, so it is imperative that your hospital act quickly to ensure any necessary modifications are in place. If the hospital expects to have any gaps or needs during an evacuation, it is vital to let your County Emergency Management know as soon as possible. Below is a checklist of items for consideration.

**Review and update the Emergency Status System (ESS).**

- ***Review entries for evacuation location and transportation to ensure current arrangements are entered.***
- ***Enter and verify emergency generator information including contact information for appropriate plant management staff.***
- ***Verify current facility contacts and phone numbers/emails. Make sure all mobile phone numbers are accurate and reflect the current administrator information.***

**Confirm your evacuation locations remain viable.**

- ***Ensure you have confirmed agreements with your receiving facility (evacuation destination) since May 1, 2020, to verify the agreements remain viable.***
- ***Will the destination you have planned allow isolation (private rooms) and/or cohorting of any positive cases you may have at the time of evacuation with dedicated staff?***
- ***Have you considered sending your COVID-positive patients to a separate location with your dedicated staff to allow appropriate separation?***

- *Have you made plans for alternative options if your original evacuation sites cancel at the last minute?*

### **Confirm your transportation plans.**

- ***Confirm transportation including arrangements for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients with the transportation provider.***
- *How will you handle transportation of any COVID cases? How will you ensure patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 do not share transportation with non-COVID patients?*
- *Have you confirmed agreements with your transportation providers for evacuation since May 1 to ensure the agreements remain viable?*

### **Evaluate timing of evacuation.**

- *Will changes to your evacuation plans result in earlier movement of patients than usual?*
- *If you have a plan to move confirmed or suspected COVID-positive patients to a different location than the rest of your patients, do these patients and their dedicated staff need to move sooner?*

### **Considerations for evacuee receiving facilities.**

- *If you are a receiving facility, ensure you can accommodate patients who will evacuate to your facility.*
- *Can you maintain isolation and distancing requirements for confirmed or suspected COVID-positive patients?*

### **Ensure emergency power.**

- *Evaluate your generator and the systems it supports.*
- *Confirm any re-fueling arrangements for generators remain intact.*

### **Review Infection Prevention and Control Plans.**

- *Ensure you have appropriate PPE supplies to take in an evacuation to include all PPE needed for Standard Precautions and patients on any Transmission-based precautions (Contact, droplet)*

- *Include the PPE and means for disposal (trash cans, bags) and hand hygiene supplies.*

### **Assess Onsite Supplies.**

- **Ensure onsite supplies for sheltering in place for an extended period of at least 72 hours.**
- Given the ability for hospitals to shelter in place due to generator support, it is essential to review your sheltering plans and secure sufficient amounts of food, water, and other necessary supplies to support your sheltering plans.

Bolded items must be completed by your facility. Following your assessment, your facility is required to immediately list the changes you have made to your plan to accommodate COVID-19 and report these modifications to your local Emergency Management Agency: <https://www.floridadisaster.org/counties/>.

For additional information and resources please visit our website at [http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19\\_alerts.shtml](http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19_alerts.shtml).

Sincerely,



Laura MacLafferty, Bureau Chief  
Bureau of Health Facility Regulation  
Division of Health Quality Assurance

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