March 16, 2020

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Community Health Centers (CHCs) across Arkansas are responding to the rapidly evolving and expanding coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Health centers are well positioned to aggressively combat such community health challenges.

If you think you may be exhibiting coronavirus symptoms, please contact your nearest CHC by telephone. That way, we can route you to the most appropriate treatment. Many of our clinics are offering evaluations of patients as they wait in their vehicles. Others have set up tents in their parking lots with a nurse that screens patients.

For the CHC nearest you, click here.

CHCs in Arkansas are putting the final touches on a statewide plan to ensure accurate protocols and communications among our members. Health centers are educating their staff and patients about the prevention and spread of COVID-19. Over the weekend, CHCs, in consultation with stakeholders, worked to develop site locations for testing and ways to facilitate telemedicine, (whereby a medical evaluation is conducted through a video conference) to especially serve our most vulnerable patients.

The CHCs are working with their staff to encourage:

- Staying home when sick,
- Covering coughs and sneezes,
- Washing hands frequently,
- Routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces; and
- Avoiding large gatherings of more than 50 persons.

The Arkansas Department of Health recommends the Centers for Disease Control guidance and FAQs, which provides appropriate steps for health care providers and community partners. Community Health Centers of Arkansas, the Primary Care Association for the state, will continue to work with member CHCs along with local emergency management contacts in response to COVID-19.