First Confirmed COVID-19 Case for Wrangell

WRANGLELL, June 7, 2020 – On Sunday, June 7, officials announced the first confirmed COVID-19 case in the community of Wrangell. The confirmed female patient is currently asymptomatic. Upon receiving the positive test result, the patient immediately isolated and continues to quarantine at home.

SEARHC staff are working with State public officials to complete contract tracing and notify anyone who may have come in contact with the individual. An investigation is currently underway to identify the source of the virus.

“With today’s announcement, COVID-19 became a reality for the community of Wrangell,” said SEARHC Vice President and Wrangell Medical Center (WMC) Administrator Leatha Merculieff. “We are thankful for the months of preparedness, as we have strengthened our protocols and equipped our facilities properly. SEARHC will continue to follow the framework constructed by our Incident Command System (ICS) and implement planned precautions throughout the Consortium.”

SEARHC ICS has worked diligently to prepare staff and facilities throughout the region for COVID-19 patients. At WMC, all visitor access has been restricted, health screenings are required at all facilities for both patients and staff, equipment has been inventoried and stocked, the hospital has configured areas specifically for COVID-19 patients, and all SEARHC staff have received COVID-19 testing.

COVID-19 testing is available in Wrangell to all patients who meet current symptomatic criteria, regardless of travel or exposure history. WMC and the AICS Clinic have established alternate screening areas for safe COVID-19 testing. Please call your provider to schedule an appointment.

Patients with chronic illnesses, or considered high-risk, should contact their provider immediately if they show symptoms. Low-risk patients are urged to self-isolate should they become sick.

Continued adherence to virus preventive practices is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, including frequent hand washing for the recommended 20 seconds; covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue; cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects; and getting an influenza vaccination. SEARHC encourages residents to follow all local, state and federal mandates and practice social distancing. Visit covid19.searhc.org for the latest coronavirus information, or to find the provider nearest you.

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