

April 1, 2020

The emergency virtual meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Whidbey Island Public Hospital District was called to order at noon by Board President, Commissioner Wallin. Present were President Wallin; Commissioner Fey; Commissioner Cammermeyer; Commissioner Blankenship; Commissioner Anderson; Chief Executive Officer/Chief Financial Officer, Ron Telles; Chief Operations Officer, Colleen Clark; Chief Nursing Officer, Erin Wooley; Chief Legal Officer, Jake Kempton; Executive Director of Facilities and Plant Engineering, Tim Waldner; and other hospital staff.

### **Points of Order**

President Wallin stated the virtual meeting will be audio and video recorded and is streaming live on WhidbeyHealth's Facebook page. Today's emergent meeting of the board is for the purpose of keeping the community abreast of steps WhidbeyHealth is taking in response to COVID-19 and contingency plans in place in the event that illness escalates in our community.

### **COVID-19 Testing Process**

CNO Erin Wooley provided an update regarding WhidbeyHealth's Hotline, swab tent, test results, COVID positive patients and staff, and surge planning.

Ms. Wooley stated the call center and swab tent has completed 1,246 calls. Of the given calls, 386 met criteria for swabbing and another 54 patients have been swabbed

for COVID-19 within the Emergency Department. The hotline averages 90 calls per day, and an average of 35 swabs per day.

The criteria for swabbing continues to focus on individuals that are symptomatic or are considered to be within a high risk category. The hotline is open 8am-4pm Monday through Thursday and 8am-noon on Fridays. The swab tent is open 9:30am-5pm Monday through Thursday and 9:30am-2pm on Fridays. It was strongly recommended that patients call the hotline to register for swabbing. The hotline number is 360-240-4055.

Ms. Wooley restated testing is not performed at WhidbeyHealth, only swabbing is performed on-site. All patients, positive or negative, will receive a phone call from a member of the WhidbeyHealth quality department to disclose test results.

Additionally, the Health Information Management team will work to upload results to the designated portal of the individual. With proper permissions and documentation, individuals may have their results emailed to them. Ms. Wooley shared the HIM phone number 360-678-7656 ext. 4201 or 4204. HIM is open Monday through Friday 8am-4:30pm.

Ms. Wooley shared that 42 positive COVID-19 patients have been seen within our hospital system, and 32 WhidbeyHealth staff members have been tested for COVID-19. Of the tested staff members, 25 tested negative, and 6 are awaiting test results.

In regards to the Surge Capacity Preparedness plan, Ms. Wooley stated WhidbeyHealth would acquire staff to aid during the COVID-19 peak period. In addition to the

acquiring of staff, cross-training of current staff has been initiated, a reserve of medical volunteers is in development, and partnering with navy has been initiated to gain providers and respiratory therapists.

To accommodate COVID-19 patients during the anticipated surge, Ms. Wooley disclosed the Ambulatory Surgery Post Anesthesia Care Unit would be converted into a ward used to care for various degrees of COVID patients. A tent has been placed outside the ED is used to safely off-load patients and prevent cross-contamination.

Ms. Wooley stated additional ventilation was received by the national stock pile and currently under assessment. It was also stated that 25 hospital beds are on reserve.

### **Emergency Department Status Update**

Dr. Perera stated the hospital and Emergency Department is running under capacity. In addition, patients considering visiting the Emergency Department should follow CDC guidelines. Individuals who have symptoms that would necessitate an ED visit for COVID should do so. Due the limited information regarding COVID, treatment options are also limited. Most hospitalized patients are receiving a combination of treatments including hydroxychloroquine.

### **Operations Update**

Chief Operations Officer Colleen Clark stated that in order to protect the community while providing services, clinics have been compressed into the Cabot facility, located

in Oak Harbor. In order to continue accessible care, Ms. Clark stated that Telemedicine has been expanded to specialty, rehab, and primary care.

Ms. Clark commended volunteers for the 595 homemade masks. In addition, 51 volunteers consisting of providers, clergy, therapists, and RN's are on reserve in anticipation of the expected surge. All volunteers will be activated through Emergency Medical Services and Island County.

### **Supplies**

Executive Director Tim Waldner stated WhidbeyHealth has received a donation of approximately 3,000 N95 masks as well as face shields, gloves, and disinfectants from our community. As of this morning we have approximately 11,000 N95 masks, approximately 8,000 surgical masks with additional shipments expected to be received today. Gowns have been received, adding a 7-9 day supply of isolation gowns. There remains a possibility that the hospital may run out of gowns in the event of a surge. To address this, gowns are being crafted, but additional gowns are still one of our greatest needs. We continue to create negative spaces for COVID patients. Mr. Waldner stated the total in-house ventilator count is 15. In regards to surge capacity, an agreement is in place with facilities.

### **Foundation Update**

Executive Director Helen Taylor stated that the COVID-19 Response Fund is the most direct way to donate funds to WhidbeyHealth. Currently, the response fund has

received over \$55,000. Ms. Taylor encourages everyone to continue to help, and additional information can be found on [WhidbeyHealth.org/giving](http://WhidbeyHealth.org/giving)

### **Financial Update**

Chief Executive Officer Ron Telles stated that due to the pandemic, resources are costing WhidbeyHealth approximately \$1 million per month. Staffing adjustments are required; therefore, temporary layoffs have been initiated. With the support of the Economic Stimulus Package, it is anticipated employee's income is supplemented resulting in little to no impact on the individual's income.

For individuals wanting to highlight the efforts of the employees, we invite the public to provide shout-outs via social media.

### **Careage of Whidbey Update**

Executive Director Sean O'Neil provided a timeline of processes and exposure. All positive residents are isolated in West unit and negative residents on East unit. In total 30 residents tested positive, 23 residents tested negative, and 73 employees tested negative. Nursing liaisons have been set up to communicate with family on a daily basis. Tablets have also been placed throughout the facility to allow for FaceTime usage.

### **Q&A**

Chief Legal Officer Jake Kempton presented questions from the public.

In response to a query of housing for the medical and temporary staff, Chief Legal

Officer Jake Kempton stated the proper resources have been lined up. There has been communications with hospitality partners in the community. Overall, adequate housing is available for our temporary staff.

In response to a question regarding the telemedicine number, Chief Operations Officer Colleen Clark requests individuals to call the Cabot office at 360-675-6648. This will enable individuals to schedule any telemedicine visits.

In response to a question regarding the COVID infection rate in the area, Dr. Perera states the answer is multifaceted. Unfortunately, our county has a higher incident rate. Based on this, it is not surprising our positive rate is higher.

In response to a question regarding the cash donations and contributions, Executive Director Helen Taylor stated WhidbeyHealth is indeed accepting cash donation. Donations must be mailed to the WhidbeyHealth PO box 641 in Coupeville, Washington.

For those who want an update on campaign contributions, Ms. Taylor asks individuals to reach out to her on the WhidbeyHealth Foundation Page.

In response to a question regarding medical workers and 6ft distancing at home, Chief Nursing Officer states individuals may isolate themselves in their home if they become symptomatic. We understand that maintaining this distance at home may be difficult. Dr. Perera asks individuals consider their risk category then use that information to decide what is best for each family.

In response to a question as to when one should attend the ED, Dr. Perera suggests individuals should visit the ED when they need help breathing or are feeling a shortness of breath.

In response to a question regarding the hospitals peak admission capacity for COVID patients, Ms. Wooley states providing a definitive number is challenging. We are working every day to expand our capabilities in our ED, ICU, and in patient units. We continue to work on this and expand.

In response to a question regarding hospitalization data reporting, Mr. Waldner stated we are doing daily reporting of given numbers.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the board meeting adjourned at  
1:04 p.m.

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President of the Commission

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Secretary of the Commission

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner