Last evening at the COVID-19 press briefing, President Trump unveiled the Opening Up America Again Testing Overview and Testing Blueprint designed to facilitate state development and implementation of the robust testing plans and rapid response programs described in the President's Guidelines for Opening Up America Again.

The President's Testing Blueprint sets forth the partnership between federal, state, local, and tribal governments, along with the private-sector and professional associations, all of which will play important roles in meeting the Nation's testing needs. The federal government provides strategic guidance on the best use of available technologies, approves new tests to expand capacity, shares best practices with states, and more. As different localities have different needs, states should each develop testing plans and rapid response programs that fit the needs of their communities.

As we move to the next phase of the pandemic, the Administration recognizes the importance of testing. Secretary Azar published an op-ed in USA Today on testing and contact tracing. He notes that CDC is deploying field teams tailored to the needs of states, as requested, to assist with contact tracing plans and advise on tools like digital technology and serologic testing. Health departments will need thousands of new workers or contractors to do the legwork of contact tracing and the CARES Act has an additional $11 billion for states to bolster their testing capacity.

Testing and Treatment

Information on Medical Device EUAs: FDA issued an FAQ document on Emergency Use Authorizations for Medical Devices. The FDA can use its Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) authority to allow the use of unapproved medical products, or unapproved uses of approved medical products, to diagnose, treat, or prevent serious or life-threatening diseases when certain criteria are met, including that there are no adequate, approved, and available alternatives. The FAQs explain the process of obtaining an EUA, the lists of available medical devices that have an EUA, and what happens to the EUA once the emergency declaration ends.

Information for Specific Populations

Information for the Food and Agricultural Sector: FDA released a fact sheet in coordination with CDC on what respirators, disposable facemasks, such as surgical or medical masks, or cloth face coverings are most appropriate for various settings. If, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, you were required to wear a respirator or disposable facemask on the job, based on a workplace hazard assessment, you should continue to do so. FDA also released information on what to do if you have an exposed worker in your food production, storage, or distribution operations regulated by the FDA. The Food and Agriculture Sector is designated as critical infrastructure, and it is essential that these operations continue during the pandemic. This summary outlines key steps that employers and workers can take to help stay open, prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19, and support continuity of essential operations if workers are diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19, or show symptoms associated with COVID-19.
Food Production Information: The FDA developed a fact sheet, What to Do If You Have COVID-19 Confirmed Positive or Exposed Workers in your Food Production, Storage, or Distribution Operations Regulated by FDA, derived from CDC recommendations. This fact sheet summarizes key steps that employers and workers can take to help stay open, prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19, and support continuity of essential operations if workers are diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19, or show symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Information for Individuals Who are Sick: CDC updated their webpage on What to Do if You Are Sick. The webpage includes a self-checker, steps to take if you are feeling sick, when to seek medical attention and tips for managing your health.

Information for Mammography Facilities: The Division of Mammography Quality Standards (DMQS) at FDA has received numerous inquiries regarding COVID-19 and its increasing impact on mammography facilities. The FDA has temporarily postponed domestic inspections including ones performed under contract with its state regulatory partners. The information posted provides regulatory flexibility and additional information on what is expected of these facilities during the pandemic.

Information for Women who are Breastfeeding: CDC updated their information on Care for Breastfeeding Women. This interim guidance is intended for healthcare providers who care for breastfeeding women and infants who receive breast milk feeds in the context of coronavirus. This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about SARS-CoV-2 and the transmission of other viral respiratory pathogens. CDC will update this interim guidance as additional information becomes available.

Infection Control in Dental Settings: CDC released Guidance on Infection Control in Dental Settings. Dental settings have unique characteristics that warrant additional infection control considerations. The guidance recommends postponing elective procedures, surgeries, and non-urgent dental visits, proactively communicating to both staff and patients the need for them to stay at home if sick, and knowing steps to take if a patient with COVID-19 symptoms enters your facility.

Information for Law Enforcement Agencies and Personnel: CDC released Guidance for Law Enforcement Agencies and Personnel. Some of the specifics include prioritization for testing, cleaning uniforms, usage of face masks and face coverings and guidance for staying home if feeling sick.

We continue in the work and appreciate your partnership. Contact Gary.Beck@hhs.gov if you have questions.