

4/22/20

LA County Department of Public Health telephone briefing for Colleges and Universities

Situational Briefing

LA County cases are flattening and this is likely to continue for weeks

Seroprevalence study

- persons testing positive are then tested with molecular diagnostic test
- seroprevalence tests should not be construed as immunity
- seroprevalence tests are NOT A TOOL TO DETERMINE WHO CAN REDUCE PHYSICAL DISTANCING
- based on seroprevalence tests so far estimate 250-500K in County have been infected
- that still means ~95% of LA County still vulnerable

"We do want people back to work and school but it is clear we need to be careful"

Talking about reopening

LAC DPH 4 criteria/prerequisites for relaxing stay at home (Ferrer did not end up speaking of all four)

1. Adequate capacity in hospitals and in primary care
 - HCW staffing, ventilators, PPE enough for COVID and normal work
 - Better job protecting the vulnerable
 - Capacity to test, including asymptomatic, especially important for colleges
 2. DPH will continue to expect significant help from campus staff in contact tracing, testing, isolation and quarantine of student cases
 3. Ability to continue all of the physical distancing and infection control, cloth face masks, hand wash/sanitizer availability, limiting congregate/sit down dining, staggered classes, lecture halls with no more than 30-40 people, less if the space is too small to allow distancing
- Don't let yourself think that screening for temps and symptoms will be that helpful – way too many asymptomatic cases

Remember, LAC DPH never ordered the closure of colleges/universities and they will NOT ORDER the reopening of colleges and universities. Even though it has been many weeks since LAC DPH has reached out to Colleges and universities, they want the colleges and Universities to talk to them about any reopening plans, they want to try to help iron out the problems. They recommend do summer remotely and then hope that the fall is a more opportune scenario to bring people back to campus

LAC DPH expects more explicit guidance for colleges and universities from the county state and federal level by mid May

LAC DPH recommends make list of lower and higher risk activities at a college and do everything you can to avoid the higher risk.

Things they see as high risk include

- Residential dorms – try to avoid reopening dorm living unless you have already identified significant excess capacity to deal with the isolation and quarantine needs that will occur when dorm living inevitably leads to new cases (aren't we glad PCC is not residential)

- Spectators at sporting events – problematic enough to get sports teams to practice and play with adequate hand washing, face masks, limiting contact; fans in the stands would be a public health nightmare
- Some sports are less risky – golf, tennis, swimming (maybe track and field if not bunched), some are more risky – football, basketball, soccer
- Smaller classes are lower risk
- Sit down dining is risky, grab and go is better

Priorities re testing will continue to evolve

LAC DPH wants primary care sites to do more of the diagnostic testing and prefers FDA EUA approved molecular or PCR testing

**We need to figure out how to get testing through quest covered – straight forward for private ins and Medi-Cal but what about the uninsured? Is their only option the county testing (tougher without a car)

Ferrer recommends make three plans for the fall since nobody knows what September will look like:

- Plan 1, the best possible outcome, safe enough to carefully creep back on campus and keep our distance
- Plan 2 – situation better but still too risky – maybe only plan to in-person classes in areas that absolutely cannot be done remotely (like labs, ensemble classes in big enough space to distance, etc)
- Plan 3 – situation still bad continue remotely with all classes

Don't expect any help from state or county for PPE

DPH will be adding more workers.

They do still call every positive case, DPH tracks anybody identified as a high risk contact and leaves the responsibility for contacting the lower risk contacts to the case if the case is well enough