

CORONAVIRUS (COVID -19) UPDATE

March 16, 2020

Granite County Hospital District has taken several steps to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Currently, there are no cases of COVID-19 confirmed in Granite County. However, we have been monitoring the situation carefully so that we may continue to keep everyone as educated and safe as possible, while still offering access to quality medical care to our local community. We have been in constant discussion with County and State officials to ensure that we have the most up to date information and make the best and most informed decision during this time.

I want to stress that we remain open and will continue to provide care to all patients, in all departments as needed. We are changing some processes to help ensure your safety and decrease the risk of spread.

These steps follow the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and are in line with other healthcare institutions. We will revisit this plan on a regular basis to ensure we are able to provide the best care to our patients, in a safe environment. We are actively looking into how we could provide some services through the use of telemedicine for those that need it or are concerned about coming into the Clinics or Hospital during this time.

These are the important changes we have made:

- **Prohibiting Visitors:** Currently, Granite County Hospital District is prohibiting all visitors to the Hospital and Long Term Care area of the building. We have notified families of this closure and will be reevaluating this status on a regular basis. We are actively working on ways our patients may be able to visit with friends and loved ones through the use of technology.
- **Call Ahead:** Do Not just walk in to be seen. This will allow us to determine what you are being seen for and assess your risk for possible COVID-19 exposure. If appropriate, we can provide testing for COVID-19. Due to the nature of this virus and how quickly it spreads, we are asking that people that are being seen for possible COVID-19 remain in their cars when they come and a provider will come out to the car to provide their care. This will help prevent COVID-19 from entering the building in an uncontained manner and will limit possible transmission to staff and other patients. We will do our best to see those with other respiratory conditions as quickly as possible and in specific areas, to minimize exposures to other illness, such as the flu.

What You Can Do: We are often asked what people can do to minimize their risk from COVID-19 and other illnesses. Below is a list of things that can help reduce one's risk.

1. **If you are feeling ill, Call your local healthcare provider** for advice: If you have fever, cough, short of breath, please stay home from work and do not go out in public.
1. **Wash hands** with soap and hot water, for 1 minute, ensure that one scrubs the tips of the fingers, thumbs, back of hands and between their fingers. This should be done multiple times a day; before eating, before and after touching one's face, eyes, or mouth, using the restroom, and periodically through the day when touching unclean surfaces.
2. **Social Distancing:** It is recommended to stay at least 6 feet apart in a social gathering to help minimize the spread. Avoid unnecessary travel and large groups of people.
3. **Cover your Cough / Sneeze:** When sneezing or coughing do this into the inside of your elbow or cover with the top of your shirt toward your armpit area. If you must use your hands, wash them immediately.
4. **Self-Care:** Eat well, get adequate rest and make sure you are drinking plenty of water.

Following these steps can help minimize the spread of this disease. This is especially important to the elderly and those with weakened immune systems.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Clinic and our Providers will be more than happy to answer your questions and concerns.

We are planning on holding a public information meeting to help update the public and answer any questions you may have. You can also find information on COVID-19 at the below listed links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cdepi/diseases/coronavirusmt>

Thank you for your trust and understanding during this global health event. By working together, we can minimize our risk of exposure, concentrate testing on those who need it and keep our county healthy.

Sincerely,

Maria Stoppler, CEO, DON

Providers and Staff of Granite County Hospital District

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