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Letter from the CEO

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The CDC is responding to an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. The outbreak first started in Wuhan, China, but cases have been identified in a growing number of other [locations internationally](#), including the United States. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as it becomes available. I encourage anyone with questions to go to the CDC website; <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in people and many different species of animals. The complete clinical picture with regard to COVID-19 is not fully understood. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild to severe, including illness resulting in death. There are ongoing investigations to learn more.

As of Saturday February 29, 2020:

- More than 85,000 cases have been reported worldwide
- 43 total cases in the USA
- 17 total hospitalizations
- 2 deaths
- 10 States reporting cases

**Symptoms:** May appear 2-14 days after exposure. Call your healthcare professional if you develop symptoms, or have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you have recently traveled from an area with [widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19](#).

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath

### **How Coronavirus is Spread:**

- Person-to-person spread. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

**Preventive Measures:**

- Thorough handwashing is critical. Soap up past the wrists, not just a quick rinse in water;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Keep distance from anyone coughing or sneezing, at least 6 feet if possible;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth;
- Learn to sneeze or cough into your elbow rather than your hand if you're not using a handkerchief, which limits the spread of the virus by hand-to-hand contact;
- Don't shake hands and skip "social" kisses, wave to friends instead if you wish;
- Get the annual flu vaccination and pneumonia if not already vaccinated. These vaccinations will not prevent getting COVID-19 but will help to reduce complications from COVID-19 by preventing flu or pneumonia infecting a respiratory system weakened by prior COVID-19;
- If you have typical flu symptoms you should do your best to "self-quarantine" by staying home from school, work or social engagements until the illness has passed, except for getting medical care;
- Since most people have had flu or bad colds before, if you get a similar illness that feels different or worse, don't hesitate to go to the clinic or ER. This is especially true if your breathing is difficult or if you have underlying lung disease.

**Hospital Preparedness:**

- Granite County Hospital District(GCHD) staff are up to date about the status of COVID-19 in the US and will maintain a high degree of vigilance if a patient comes in with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection;
- GCHD staff is up to date in the procedure for submitting testing samples to the state lab;
- The Hospital is fully stocked with necessary isolation supplies in the ER and hospital;
- Isolation procedures for patients with various infectious diseases are used often and so staff is up to date with knowing how to follow isolation procedures.

If you have any additional questions, please consult with your healthcare provider.  
Thank you.

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Granite County Hospital District