



March 20, 2020

Dear Valued Patients:

We know this is a deeply unsettling time due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. With the current situation we are confronted with today, we are in unprecedented times. It can be overwhelming with the overload of information you are receiving on a daily basis. Rest assured we are committed to your personal health. Please know that Lake Roosevelt Community Health Centers are here to help. Here are some important topics we want to make sure you keep in mind.

Be alert for any flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, body aches or shortness of breath. If you experience any of these symptoms, we have procedures in place to test for COVID-19.

It is important to note that most cases of COVID-19 are mild and should be managed at home. If you are over 60, have underlying health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease or diabetes, have a weakened immune system and/or are pregnant, you are at higher risk. If you have any of the flu-like symptoms listed above or have been exposed to anyone who has these symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider.

While it is still safe for patients to receive care with our clinics, we are beginning to shift as many appointments as possible to later dates to reduce possible exposure to our patients and our care teams. Some visits and procedures may be delayed until the outbreak has subsided. Our clinics will continue to provide in-person care that is considered medically urgent and cannot be provided over the phone, including physician-ordered testing for patients who are considered high risk for COVID-19. Most importantly, we are asking patients to call their healthcare provider if they are exhibiting any fever or respiratory symptoms before they come into our clinics. If you require care, please follow the usual process of scheduling. If you need immediate help and would like to speak with a provider, assistance is available. If you have an upcoming appointment for a routine checkup or wellness visit, we will be in touch to try to provide your care by phone so you can avoid coming in person.

The current plan is to continue to see all patients under the following guidelines:

Medical Department: Patients at risk will be identified through iCare.

- Specifically, those at risk will have a diagnostic history of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Asthma, Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), diabetes or other respiratory history.
- Identified patients will be contacted by the clinic and requested to order medication refills by phone rather than coming to the clinic for prescription refills and routine care.
- They will be educated regarding generally avoiding contact with others for the next few weeks, even if their contacts are not sick. This may require staying home and getting outside assistance.
- The clinic will investigate options for helping those who are at home and in need of supplies.
- They will be directed to the clinic Facebook page where they can find more information about self-care.

Dental: Appointments for routine dental care (such as checkups, cleanings or fillings) will be cancelled. We will work to reschedule as our capacity allows. Urgent or emergency care will be provided in Inchellum and Keller on available days. To be seen at the clinic, you must have one or more of these conditions.

- Severe toothache pain (not just a twinge).
- Swelling of the gums, face, or neck.
- Bleeding in the mouth that does not stop.
- Infection or a substantial risk of it.
- Trauma (such as a broken tooth).

If patients believe they have urgent dental needs and should be seen, they should call the Dental Clinic for a phone consultation. Patients who are coming to the dental clinic will be asked to wait in their cars before they are brought into the clinic for assessment and possible treatment.

**Pharmacy:** The clinic nurse and administration will coordinate with the pharmacy to have appropriate over-the-counter supportive medications on hand for the community.

- The clinic will establish a drive in service.
- Pharmacy will fill 2 month supplies of medication when requested by the patients if their insurance allows.
- The patient will be asked to call in the day of pickup and pay over the phone with a card (debit/credit) if they are unable to pay in person.
- Curbside pickup will be available to patients that are advised not to enter the clinic.
- Over-the-counter (OTCs) medications that provide supportive care will be available to all patients.
- OTCs will be limited to one bottle per patient to allow for availability to all patients.

**Physical Therapy:** The current plan is to continue to see all patients who are referred and scheduled for therapy under the following guidelines.

- All patients will be screened upon arrival for temperature, if a fever is present, they will be asked to return home and to contact their Primary care provider. If they are symptom free they will be seen with all the precautions currently in place according to clinic policies and procedures.
- Patients who verbally report having had a fever & cough in the last two weeks will be asked to cancel all therapy until they are at least in a two week symptom-free status.
- The office manager will contact all high risk patients currently on the schedule and ask them to defer therapy unless they are post-op.
- Priority scheduling will be given to patients who are in the first two weeks of post-operative status and/or acute injury.

**Behavioral Health:** The current plan is to continue to see all patients under the following guidelines.

- All patients will be screened upon arrival for viral symptoms and fever.
- Patients that have a negative screening result for viral symptoms and/or fever will be able to attend their scheduled appointment.
- Patients that have a positive screening result for viral symptoms and/or fever will be directed to LRCHC's on-site COVID 19 test site, and will follow the medical guidance provided.
- Patients that are vulnerable to physical illness will be contacted by the Behavioral Health providers and be provided with the option of scheduling telephone appointments.

**Optometry:** Optometry department will only be taking emergency appointments, post-op visits, glaucoma follow-up visits, diabetic eye exams, acute eye conditions & retinal follow-ups. Routine eye exams will be put on a waiting list until further notice.

The clinic will remain open. In general, symptoms such as fever, cough, and sore throat, shortness of breath and body aches can be related to COVID 19. We are asking patients to call if they are experiencing these symptoms or have been exposed to somebody who has these symptoms. Your call will be routed to a staff person who will get more information from you and help decide if you should come to the clinic or stay at home.

If you are coming to the clinic for routine care, consider postponing the visit. If you come to the clinic you will be directed to check-in at the tent in front of the clinic where we will evaluate you before entering the building. If you have active symptoms or a fever, you will be directed to the entrance on the north side of the building. From there you will be given a mask and gloves and directed to a specific exam room set aside for those with symptoms. You will be seen by a provider who will evaluate your condition and decide regarding testing for a respiratory virus.

Our patients are at the center of all we do. During this time of uncertainty, we want to reassure you that we are doing everything we can to provide the best care possible, while ensuring the safety of our patients, staff and visitors.

Please take precautions. Wash your hands regularly, stay at home and away from large groups of people, and cover your cough. We care about you and our community and want to keep everyone safe.

Thank you for your patience and understanding,



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