Departmental Response to COVID-19 4/9/2020

Please read through the information below completely for important reminders and updates to the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine response to the outbreak of COVID-19. Got an update for COVID-19 that you want to share with the Leadership Huddle or in this email? Email it to dfpm@utah.edu.

4/9/2020 Updates

GENERAL and ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES
- University of Utah Hiring Freeze. The University of Utah has implemented a hiring freeze, the details of which are explained in the attached document. To make sure all current positions remain filled, Central Administration is applying the hiring freeze for internal promotions within the department as well. Exemptions to the department hiring freeze should be submitted to Holly Bynum and will be reviewed by the Central Leadership Team.
- Protocols for Food Donations During the COVID-19 Pandemic. If you would like to donate food items for those in need during the pandemic, please follow the new guidelines on food donations (to ensure your donation remains safe and is processed correctly.

CLINICAL UPDATES
- Essential Appointments Redefined.
  - Original definition of essential appointment: Patient will experience harm to their health if not taken care of within six weeks.
  - New definition of essential appointment: Patient will experience harm to their health if not taken care of by June 1, 2020.

  The number of cases in Utah has not surged as drastically as expected and it has become clear that the pandemic will last longer here as a result. The expanded definition of “essential appointment” is an effort to shorten the wait time for patients who need care. Determining which patients should have an in-person appointment is up to individual clinician judgement. Refer to your supervisors with any questions.

EDUCATION UPDATES
- Current Student Challenges. We have reports of students facing unique challenges due to the shelter-in-place order and other pandemic restrictions. Specifically, there are concerns some students lack adequate computer and Internet access, and are having difficulty accessing faculty whose responsibilities have expanded to include pandemic maintenance. DFPM Leadership is looking at department-wide support mechanisms for students and their faculty who are facing educational hardship. If you or your students have specific challenges, please report them promptly so that the department response can address them. We also encourage reaching out to your colleagues in other divisions, as not all groups have been impacted in the same way by the COVID-19 crisis.

COMMUNICATION UPDATES
- External Communication. COVID-19 is creating an unprecedented level of sensitivity to media communications. Faculty are encouraged to exercise judgement and err on the side of caution when speaking publicly.
Guidance for Faculty Regarding Media Communications

- Review the message from Dr. Good and the Code of Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.
- Join the regular 8:00 a.m. COVID-19 Live Stream to gather data and context.
- Reach out to Public Affairs (801-581-2121) or Ed Clark (Ed.Clark@hsc.utah.edu) for specific questions.
- Consider the possible consequences of well-intended messages.
- Exercise situational awareness.

RESEARCH UPDATES

- Research Approval Process. The Research Team plans to maintain normal flow of research approval. They are working with OSB to accomplish that goal.

PREVIOUS UPDATES

In the interest of space, previous updates have been moved online. Please let Danny Nelson know if you have difficulty accessing them. Remember that the situation is changing rapidly, and that more current information may contradict previous instruction.