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MCHD COVID-19 Operational Update

Matagorda County Hospital District (MCHD) Administrative and Medical Officials Meet with State, County, and City Leaders To Discuss Options for “Return to Normal” Operational Status

BAY CITY, Texas: On Tuesday, April 28, 2020, Matagorda County Hospital District medical and administrative officials along with County Judge Nate McDonald, Bay City Mayor Robert Nelson and City Manager Shawna Burkhart, Palacios Mayor Glen Smith, and Matagorda County EOC Public Information Officer Mitch Thamess met with representatives from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to discuss options for a “return to normal” operational status for the Matagorda Regional Medical Center.

The main topic of discussion was the reinstatement of elective surgeries, but other topics such as visitor policies and the reopening of the wellness center, gift shop, and cafeteria were also discussed.

“The emergency surgeries our teams have performed during this COVID-19 crisis have produced excellent outcomes, and we’ve been able to flex staffing and resources to keep our hospital from becoming overwhelmed while providing screening, testing, and care for COVID-19 patients,” said J. Warren Robicheaux, Hospital District CEO. “The careful, physician and nurse-guided planning strategies we used to achieve that success are the same strategies we’re using going forward to determine the safest and most responsible way to bring our health system back to full capacity.”

Dr. Fabricio Zuniga, Vice Chief of Staff and COVID-19 Taskforce Chairman remarked, “It’s encouraging to see our elected county and city officials coming together with hospital and DSHS representatives all at the same time to make sure we’re on the same page. The data-driven information and expert advice we received from all parties involved today will ensure that the Hospital District’s COVID-19 Taskforce has the information needed to make sound and responsible decisions.”

“We know that COVID-19 is not behind us yet,” said Aaron Fox, Hospital District Chief Business Development Officer and Public Information Officer. “But the good news is that we now have enough historical data to have confidence in our projections. Using adjusted daily averages, we can monitor the number of tests conducted in our county, adjust per site source, and use that data as a leading indicator to project our community’s COVID-19 health status. This will allow us to plan hospital, medical group, and community health center resources accordingly.”

The information and recommendations from today's meeting will be carried by Dr. Fabricio Zuniga to the MRMC COVID-19 Taskforce for consideration and ultimate determination. This guidance, along with MRMC's new Cepheid GeneXpert and Abbott ID NOW rapid testing capabilities, will inform the "return to normal" plan.

Dr. Zuniga is scheduled to give a public address on behalf of the taskforce and the hospital district outlining these decisions on or before May 8th.

"As a community, we can't let our guard down," Dr. Zuniga said, "and we're not out of the woods yet with this highly contagious virus. It's important that we all continue following social distancing and hygiene guidelines because personal responsibility and social ethics are still a critical component in slowing and reducing the spread of COVID-19 in our region."

Matagorda County Hospital District Officials support and are committed to following the guidelines set forth by Texas Governor Greg Abbott for hospitals and health organizations.

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The Matagorda County Hospital District (MCHD) was established in 1965 by an act of the Texas Legislature to serve the health care needs of Matagorda County residents. A seven-member Board of Managers is appointed by the Commissioners' Court to govern the management of the facility and to guide major health-related initiatives. For more information, visit
<https://www.matagordaregional.org/mchd> or contact

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