Situation update

Today marks the 19th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the U.S. One of the deadliest days in history. Let us not forget those that suffered loss. In 2020, we are faced with a different type of an attack; one caused by a virus. Today also marks 6 months since the World Health Organization declared the pandemic.

Ohio & Local Data and Updates:
As of 2pm yesterday, Ohio has reported 134,086 cases of COVID-19 and 4354 deaths. Of those cases, 112,140 are presumed to be recovered and there has been nearly 2.5 million tests performed in Ohio.

Six counties have triggered enough COVID-19 indicators to be at Red Alert Level 3 in the most recent update. These counties include Butler, Mercer, Montgomery, Preble, Putnam, and Summit.

Fulton County has reported 207 total cases and one death. Fulton, Henry and Williams Counties, are at Yellow Alert Level 1. After many weeks at Level 3, Lucas County is now at Orange Alert Level 2, along with Defiance and Wood Counties. Henry County is reporting 10 deaths, Defiance is reporting 8 deaths.

The Travel Advisory (for having cases greater than 15%) has been updated September 9, 2020 and includes North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, and Alabama.

As of Tuesday, 9/8/2020, Ohio schools will need to notify parents/guardians and local health departments within 24 hours of being aware of a positive case or clinical diagnosis of COVID-19 in the school. Then beginning 9/15/2020 and weekly thereafter, health departments will report to ODH the number of newly reported and cumulative number of cases of Ohio K-12 students and staff per school district. ODH will publish data each Thursday.

Headlines:

Attention Browns and Bengals fans: Governor DeWine announced that the Cleveland Browns and the Cincinnati Bengals have been granted a variance to the state sports order that will allow a total of up to 6000 spectators at two home games as a trial (no more than 1500 spectators in each side of the stadium). Fans will need to use a designated entrance and will be required to wear a mask.

Analysist say the 10-day Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, held at the beginning of August in South Dakota could be responsible for 250,000 new COVID-19 cases seen in the past month. The large rally with anywhere from 400,000 to 500,000 attendees is being criticized for the lack of enforcing social distancing mandates and mask use. At least 12 states are tracking cases linked to the event.

Droplet Plus Precautions
Only the name has changed but the required PPE and patient placement remains the same for patients suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. Signage is on lilac (purple) paper for quick identification.

- Private room with the door closed (negative pressure if available and aerosol-generating procedures are anticipated).
- Respirator, eye protection, gown and gloves required.
- Hand hygiene prior to donning PPE and entering room; and after doffing PPE and exiting the room.
- Dedicated patient care equipment when possible; otherwise, disinfect equipment after each patient use.

Testing:
We continue to use a combination of tests by sending some to Quest, and Cleveland Clinic; and for patients requiring hospitalization and transfer, a respiratory panel can be done with results in an hour. Lab is also working on obtaining a rapid point-of-care molecular test that would give results in less than 15 minutes. No projected date yet when that will be ready.

CMS recent interim final rules dictate testing in long term care based on the county test positivity rate and in response to an outbreak (one positive case identified in a resident or healthcare worker).
Vaccination:
Vaccine makers have all signed a pledge to “uphold the integrity of the scientific process as they work towards potential global regulatory filings and approvals of the first COVID-19 vaccines.” This comes in response to skeptics concern that the vaccine is being rushed as a political measure when CDC asked states to make preparations in anticipation of vaccine distribution. Meanwhile, as a safety measure, AstraZeneca has paused their large trial of a vaccine to have an independent committee investigate if a serious adverse reaction to one U.K. participant is directly related to the vaccine or other cause. Two other companies continue with their late-stage (phase 3) vaccine trials in the United States.

Influenza vaccination season is quickly approaching. It's hard to predict what this flu season will be like with all these added safety measures (social distancing, mask, hand hygiene) but we must prepare for the possibility that both influenza and the virus that causes COVID-19 will circulate this fall and winter. Be sure to get your flu vaccine this year when it becomes available!

10 Ways to Improve Patient Interactions While Wearing a Mask, from MedPage Today, looks at the challenges of effectively communicating when wearing a face covering and offers strategies to engage with patients.

- Focus on what you can do- tone of voice, gestures
- Be an active listener- eye contact, body language
- Do not engage in uncomfortable levels of eye contact
- Mirror what you are saying with hand gestures and body language- nodding, thumbs up, wave
- Exaggerate emotion with your eyes and eyebrows
- Use vocal variety to convey emotion
- Focus on talking slower and more clearly
- Look for empathetic opportunities
- Minimize dominant conversation
- Modify your communication to match your patient's

3Ws:
WEAR a mask!
WASH your hands!
WATCH your distance!

Quote of the Day: (to all you heroes out there)
Heroes aren’t in it for themselves.