



# MEDIC ONE



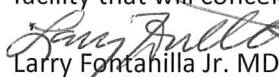
12 March 2020

To: All transporting EMTs and paramedics in Thurston County

With the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Thurston County, we will start to see increasing demands for testing from both patients and providers. Some of these cases will be among patients that have only mild symptoms or perhaps no symptoms at all. There will be a tendency for patients or caregivers to want to seek testing at the Emergency Department. This is not appropriate or recommended. As of this writing, the Emergency Department is only testing patients that are sick enough to require admission for supportive care. Mildly ill patients are being asked to self-quarantine at home and seek care from their primary care providers or as directed by public health. I am writing this directive because I realize that as EMS providers you are being put in the middle. There are long term care facilities that are currently requesting hospital transport for residents to get screened for SARS-COV2. With agreement of the Thurston County Public Health Officer, I am therefore directing the following:

1. No patient should be transported to any hospital-based emergency department solely for the purpose of testing for SARS-COV2 or COVID-19
2. For patients with respiratory symptoms and a fever, screen for the following:
  - a. Respiratory Rate over 20
  - b. Heart rate over 100
  - c. Increased work of breathing
  - d. Decreased level of alertness (from baseline)
  - e. Any other life-threatening symptoms or signs
3. Patients that do not demonstrate any of the above screens will not be transported to the Emergency Department and will be left at their facility. Patients will be asked to follow up with primary care, follow up with public health, or to call back if symptoms worsen.
4. Public health is currently working on a solution to aid in-facility testing for these individuals

Please practice compassion and continue to be kind, courteous, and professional with patients, their families, and facility staff as we will sometimes not meet their expectations with this strategy. However, please explain that these are your orders, and as best you can, the reason behind these orders. It is never the intention to deny any patient emergent medical care. However, for a patient that does not require admission, there is no good outcome to be expected from transportation into AND out of a facility that will concentrate exposures.

  
Larry Fontahilla Jr. MD

MPD, Thurston County Medic One