



Date: March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Testing Prioritization**

Dear Valued Medical Providers:

I am writing to you today to ask for your support in assuring that test requests from your office for COVID -19 testing submitted to any of the Steward Hospital COVID-19 Outpatient Testing facilities are in accord with the Steward Health Care **Testing Priority** algorithm noted below. We have updated our priority list based on the newly reported CDC guidelines (attached) to ensure we have adequate supply of test collection kits for our patients and healthcare workers. We would greatly appreciate your support in this action and only order tests for those persons who meet the criteria under items 1 to 3. Asymptomatic patients have the lowest priority and we hope that you will discourage testing at this time.

**Testing Priorities:**

1. System will prioritize **HOSPITALIZED** patients and **HCWs who are ill** first.

Then, regarding the Ambulatory Care setting, testing priorities continue as follows:

2. Individuals with fevers and signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory tract illness who also:
  - are elderly<sup>1</sup>
  - have underlying chronic health conditions<sup>2</sup>
  - are HCWs or First Responders
  - are residents of Long-Term Care facility
3. As resources allow, additional suspect individuals<sup>3</sup> with symptoms in a community of rapidly increasing hospital cases, in order to decrease community, spread and ensure health of essential workers, testing should be prioritized as follows:
  - Test Critical infrastructure workers with symptoms
  - Test HCW and First Responders with symptoms
  - Test Individuals w/mild symptoms in communities experiencing high COVID-19 hospitalizations.
  - Individuals who do not meet any of the above categories with symptoms
  - Consider testing individuals exposed to clusters of acute respiratory illnesses in congregate settings like long term facilities, prisons or shelters where