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Nilesh Kalyanaraman, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Health Officer

August 19, 2020

Dear Primary Care Physicians:

Testing for COVID-19 is critical to Anne Arundel County's recovery. Containing the spread of COVID requires readily available access to testing for all residents. The Anne Arundel County Department of Health has created a comprehensive testing strategy to ensure testing is equitably available, low barrier and taking place in partnership with the community, County agencies and health care providers. Our goal is to test 2% (11,600) of county residents weekly.

In order to reach this goal we need medical providers to offer COVID-19 testing as routine screening for your patient panels. Most practices are offering testing and care for people with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. Incorporating asymptomatic COVID-19 testing as a routine part of preventive screening is necessary to ensure your patients and their families are safely participating in the reopening of our county. As we work toward recovery, aggressive testing throughout the county will be a key part of our success.

To make this testing widely available, we need you to:

- Educate your patients on the full range of symptoms of COVID-19 (Table 1)
- Encourage your patients to get tested for COVID-19 within 48 hours of symptom onset
- Offer tests to asymptomatic individuals
- Incorporate COVID-19 testing into your routine lab screening
- Set up streamlined testing capacity for your patients
- Provide targeted outreach to at-risk individuals (Table 2)

The Department of Health is invested in helping practices provide testing for their patients. Please click the link below and tell us a little about your current testing practices and barriers to testing.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DOHProviderSurvey>

A representative of the Department of Health will be contacting practices to follow-up on survey results. We will be sharing best practices and successful testing practices as they are identified.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tonii Gedin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tonii Gedin, RN, DNP
Deputy Health Officer of Public Health

Table 1.

COVID-19 Symptoms	
Adults and Children	Children
<p>People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.</p> <p>Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cough ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ● Fever ● Chills ● Muscle pain ● Sore throat ● New loss of taste or smell <p>This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.</p>	<p>Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. However, we know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes COVID-19, or had been around someone with COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever ● Abdominal pain ● Vomiting ● Diarrhea ● Neck pain ● Rash ● Bloodshot eyes ● Feeling extra tired <p>Be aware that not all children will have all the same symptoms.</p>

Source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Table 2.

At Risk Populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People older than 60 ● African Americans ● Hispanics ● People with Chronic Disease ● People who are Immunocompromised ● Women Pregnant or Breastfeeding ● People Experiencing Homelessness ● People with Disabilities

Source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)