As COVID-19 cases have now been reported in this region, Community Memorial Hospital in Redfield reminds the general public of what they need to know concerning this virus.

COVID-19 symptoms and testing

People who utilize Community Memorial Hospital facilities for their health care who feel they may have been exposed to COVID-19 or who are displaying symptoms are asked to call 1-877-AT-AVERA (1-877-282-8372), or their local clinic number 605-472-1110 or 605-472-0515

Symptoms include fever over 100 degrees, cough and shortness of breath. Not everyone who contracts this virus will become seriously ill, in fact 80% of people can be treated at home.

"It's important to call your local clinic 605-472-1110 or 605-472-0510 first or call 1-877-AT-AVERA, rather than going directly to your clinic in order to protect other patients and staff," said Tom Snyder Interim CEO.   "CMH has set up processes for testing that will limit exposure to staff and other patients. If a provider determines that someone needs testing, we will refer patients to the correct site for testing."

Employers and businesses are asked to not require a provider's note for employees who are sick with respiratory illness to validate their illness or return to work. This is because health care facilities are extraordinarily busy during this time. Per this guideline from the Centers from Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CMH is not providing sick notes.

Visitors

Community Memorial Hospital will not allow visitors at this time.

"This policy is for the protection of everyone," said Snyder. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it.

Protect yourself and your loved ones

Here's how you can protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19:
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- If you are sick, limit close contact with others as much as possible.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

- Practice social distancing by avoiding crowds and limiting physical contact, i.e., shaking hands or hugging.

"This is a challenging time for our community, our state, our nation and even our world. Please stay informed about COVID-19 and practice these guidelines. As your local health care provider, we at will continue to work hard to prevent the spread of this virus and deliver high quality care for those who become ill or need health services for other conditions. We want to thank our staff and our community members for your support," said Snyder.

For additional information on COVID-19, please go to Avera.org/COVID-19.