

# COVID-19 Update

Mono Co Board of Supervisors

January 19, 2021

# Topics

- Pandemic trends: local, regional, state
- Vaccination update
- Testing update
- Case investigation and contact tracing (CICT)
- Schools guidance, update
- Newly recognized virus strain

# Indicators of virus transmission (local)

- Continued high rates of transmission
- Week ending 1/9: Case rate 111/100k/d – highest yet
  - Second only to San Benito
- Percent positivity: 18.4%
  - Looks to be 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> highest in the state
  - State average ~12%
- Mammoth Hospital relatively unimpacted, functioning normally

# Region and State

- RSAHO remains in effect for us, with officially 0% ICU beds available
- Central Valley and Bay Area also static
- Sacramento area eligible to exit RSAHO 1/12
- Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside continue to struggle
  - LA testing at high rate; positivity well below state average; but severe hospital impacts continue
  - San Bernardino and Riverside v. high positivity rates
- $R_0$  region 0.98 and state 0.95- encouraging
- Statewide positivity rate remains high at 12%
- Hospitalizations trending down (20K projected decline to 17K over 1 mo.)
- Statewide 3 million total cases with 33, 593 deaths to date

# Testing

- Going well, achieving reasonably good testing rates
- Utilization of Public Health and Verily testing resources
- New system involving Valencia Branch Lab seems promising
- Some logistic/supply issues
- Turnaround time (shipping challenges)
- Verily will transition to OptumServ sometime between now and the end of February
- Still unclear what OptumServ resources Mono will receive
  - State Testing Task Force expresses confidence in orderly transition

# Case Investigation and Contact Tracing

- Modified objectives due to high caseloads (lowered expectations)
- Focus on cases
- Identification of higher risk situations
- Limited contact tracing
- Fair amount of non-cooperation
- R2R lacks funds for unincorporated county residents who must isolate or quarantine (and who lack sick leave, etc)

# 211 Nurse Help Line

- Busy
- Many calls now vaccine-related
- Need to set up phone line dedicated to vaccine issues

# Vaccination

- In the midst of Phase 1b, Tier 1
- Age 65 and older, emergency services, education & childcare, food & Ag
- About 1000 people vaccinated to date
  - No serious adverse events, e.g. severe allergic reactions
- Consumed initial Pfizer (hospital) and Moderna (Public Health)
- New larger allotment 2925 Pfizer doses rec'd Friday
- Scaling up vaccination efforts and capacity
- Working out models, processes, staffing, clinic capacity

# CDPH “pause” of one Moderna lot

- Investigation into cluster of apparent serious allergic reactions at one site in San Diego
- CDPH recommends holding use of that lot pending more information
- We had received some of said lot and administered without problem
- 100 doses remaining (designated second doses) and seeking replacement

# Vaccination Challenges

- Public communication
  - Multi-faceted efforts necessary to inform people and encourage registration
- Funding?
- Complex scheduling of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2d doses (2 products; differing intervals)
- Registration process: “pre-registration” on Mono Co website (COVID portal); phone option essential but no dedicated line/staff as yet
- Staffing-county, hospital and volunteer staff
  - Hospital will pay staff to work at vaccination sites on their own time (moonlighting)
- Registration remains rate-limiting step
- Valuable Planning assistance from Sandra DiDomizio, local event organizer (Green Fox Events)
- John Urdi and MLT excellent volunteer recruitment and organizer
- Probation and Sheriffs Depts offer vaccination site security

# Vaccination This Week

- Improving processes, efficiency and throughput
- Staff training (registration)
- Figuring out right staffing mix and matching it to number of recipients expected (invited plus walk-in)
  - Gradually increasing size of clinics/# vaccinees
- Lee Vining today; Mammoth tomorrow (1<sup>st</sup> and 2d doses); Mammoth Saturday
- Transitioning Mammoth site from Fire House #2 to High School

# Progress

- Vaccines on hand should be enough to largely complete current tier (Phase 1b, Tier 1)
- Roughly 2 ½ to 3 weeks
- IF 70% vaccine uptake among Mono County adults, our target population is around 8000 people (2 doses each)
  - National survey Nov-Dec found less than 60% US adults wanted vaccine
  - We hope those numbers increase
  - Targeting also Mono essential workers who live elsewhere (difficult to quantify)
- Expect to attain 20% of first doses administered to rough 8000 vaccinee goal within week
- Future vaccine supply uncertain

# Schools

- New guidance released last week
- ESUSD permitted to open this week
- As they had already opened, then “paused”
- Must post/submit new plan conforming to CalOSHA, CDE, CDPH guidelines and a CDPH checklist
- Mammoth Unified cannot open until case rate at or below 25/100K/day
- At those levels can only open K-6 for in-person learning
- Must attain Red Tier to open to middle and high schools

# Changes to School Guidance

- masking policy language a little stricter
- De-emphasis of routine disinfection
- Somewhat more lenient rules for closing in response to outbreaks
- Continued emphasis on stable cohorts, lowering indoor risks

# Mutant virus strain-L452R strain in Mono

- Recent informed by CDPH of presence of a distinct strain of the novel coronavirus in Mono
  - L452R
- 16/56 (27%) Mono County specimens sequenced at state level
  - Specimens collected Dec 10-28
- One of many mutant virus strains
- First reported in May 2020, China
- Apparently increasing in prevalence in CA and US
- Epidemiological and clinical significance unknown

# Concerns about new SARS-2 CoV strains

- Increased transmissibility possible
  - This is not known to be true of L452R
- UK B117 strain highly transmissible expected to become dominant in US within months
  - Not necessarily more deadly case by case but more cases means more death, disability and disruption
  - May disrupt some preventive concepts
    - E.g. anecdotal reports that being outdoors may be less protective
- Fears that mutant strains may decrease the effectiveness of vaccines and monoclonal antibody treatments

# Conclusions

- Situation remains extremely serious
- Vaccination highest priority; capacity increasing
  - Highly effective vaccines our best prospect for limiting death, disability and economic harms
  - Supply expected to be rate-limiting factor
- Testing and CICT continue and should be sustained
- New strains add uncertainty
- Basic preventive measures remain essential
  - Distance, stay home except for essential purposes, minimize mixing of households, mask & wash