April 4, 2020

Dear Hospital Administrator,

The collaboration among the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and hospitals across the state is critical to our collective, effective functioning as we implement systems to address the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize the hard work at all levels of the health system in the face of this unprecedented health crisis. OHA’s ongoing tracking of hospital capacity data is vital throughout the COVID-19 response.

OHA uses the Hospital Capacity Web System (HOSCAP) as an important component to determine where additional beds, alternative care sites, and other resources will be needed. Last week, OHA requested all hospitals begin reporting on COVID-specific information on bed/ventilator availability and personal protective equipment to provide critical information to guide decisions and planning for the expected medical surge. The majority of hospitals have complied – submitting data twice daily, between 6-9 am and 6-9 pm.

As data have been reported by hospitals, we’ve recognized there may not be a shared understanding of the data definitions. Since then, OHA staff have refined the data fields and definitions based on hospital feedback to provide clarity and better ensure consistent, quality data are reported.

The immediate priority is to ensure that all hospitals are entering accurate data for the COVID response – including total hospitalized COVID patients, COVID patients in the ICU, and COVID patients on ventilators- to provide a view of health care capacity across Oregon. By Sunday, April 5th, we must ensure that all hospitals are entering data for the following fields, and that the data are accurate:

Data fields specific to COVID already added in March, including:
- Current number of hospitalized COVID patients, confirmed or suspected
- Confirmed or suspected COVID patients in ICU beds
- Confirmed or suspected COVID patients on ventilators

On Saturday April 4th, OHA will be adding three additional fields:
- Current number of hospitalized COVID patients who have a positive COVID test result
- Patients in ICU beds who have a positive COVID test result
- Patients on ventilators who have a positive COVID test result

To support you in this request, OHA staff will be reaching out to your HOSCAP reporting point of contact to ensure data quality and address questions about definitions, update frequencies, and provide customer support and address any additional needs of your staff.
Quality improvement of the HOSCAP system will continue. OHA expects hospitals to continue reporting to HOSCAP on PPE, ventilators, and overall hospital capacity (available beds), which are also important to our collective efforts. As the COVID-19 response evolves, OHA may request additional data from hospitals.

HOSCAP has been in use since 2009, in part to collect important hospital data during the H1N1 pandemic. The completeness of these data are critical for planning for the surge of COVID hospitalizations and managing hospital beds and other resources around the state. The HOSCAP system is designed to inform ongoing capacity planning, time-sensitive needs regarding specific incidents, and now the unprecedented need to understand the COVID pandemic in Oregon.

Our partnership with hospitals is essential, and we appreciate your focus on this request.

Thank you,

Patrick M. Allen
Director, Oregon Health Authority