

Message

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Sent: 6/24/2020 1:31:10 PM
To: Caputo, Michael (HHS/ASPA) [REDACTED]; Traverse, Brad (HHS/ASPA) [REDACTED]
Weber, Mark (HHS/ASPA) [REDACTED]
Subject: On the testing and cases issue....

Key message has to be:

There is a rise in cases due to testing and also simultaneously due to the relaxing of restrictions, less social distancing. We always knew as you relax and open up, cases will rise...but what type of cases? If we test more we will find more...but are the new cases problematic??? That's the key....we also know that viruses mutate constantly and spontaneously but the mutation is often to a much milder versions...so are we seeing increased cases as social distancing increases but milder illness not needing as much emergency care as before??? Is the virus weakening in lethality?

The aspect to watch is not the rise in testing, but

- 1) Positivity rate (positives)...is it flat? Is it under 10% (threshold)? Is it trending down as testing goes up or is it increasing? How is the trend in the rate over time? Increasing positivity rate means spread...that's a concern.
- 2) Hospitalizations....but critical is ICU use...not just an emergency visit....not those who go to emergency but actually who get admitted. Is it for COVID??? Or you are positive for COVID but admitted for something else? COVID was not an issue
- 3) Are cases asymptomatic, mild illness needing no support other than home care (stay home, get rest), or more serious illness needing hospitalization and respiratory support???
- 4) ICU bed use...is it on the rise?
- 5) Oxygen support/respiratory support...is it on the rise?
- 6) Ventilator use...is it on the rise?
- 7) Deaths...is it on the rise?

We need also to tout the good stories as we know of elderly with serious conditions who get it and survive...this is key to tell...

We also need to tell that seasonal influenza kills 200 infants and children per year in US...200...much more lethal than COVID as thus far, we have 3 deaths that are in question as if due to COVID in kids in US....this tells us the pathogen is not that lethal as if it were, would impact children more. This is how we have to think of it.

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