

The Impact of COVID-19



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A MESSAGE TO OUR COMMUNITY

It seems strange to think that the Coronavirus (COVID-19)—now a part of daily conversation—was not even a whisper just six months ago. It came on quickly and with a vengeance, spreading infection to many and fear to all.

As the North Bay's healthcare leader, MarinHealth™ jumped into action at the first mention of the pandemic. We are committed to fostering health and wellness of our community, and we answered the call without hesitation.

Our response was immediate, taking many forms at every level of the organization. We worked closely with local and national health organizations to share best practices and information. We assigned task forces to tackle preparations in our MarinHealth Medical Network Clinics, MarinHealth Medical Center, and the community. To cite the old adage, we prepared for the worst and hoped for the best as we galvanized staff to meet the challenge.

Our Response Was Efficient & Effective.

Surge Preparations—to ensure everyone's safety, we made plans to treat potential COVID-19 patients safely and separately. We assigned a specific Medical Network clinic to accept potential COVID-19 cases, and developed protocols at our Medical Center's Emergency Department for safe triage.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)—we rushed to source appropriate PPE (masks, gloves, gowns, screens, etc.) for staff and patients. As an independent hospital, we were at a disadvantage in bidding against large medical systems, but our diligent teams were successful nonetheless. In addition to securing the protective equipment we needed, we began testing and using innovative equipment like intubation boxes, which enable caregivers to intubate patients with less risk of contagion.



Telehealth Video Visits—to comply with the shelter-in-place mandate and state regulations, we limited patient access to our clinics and hospital, and began offering video visits with our Medical Network providers for primary and specialty care.

Testing—we researched the most reliable and effective testing kits, and set up multiple testing sites, including a drive-through option. In collaboration with Marin County Public Health and other Marin hospitals, we created a unique mobile testing force and deployed them to lower-income neighborhoods, assisted living and skilled nursing facilities to test residents and help avoid the spread of the virus. We worked with multiple sources to process our tests as quickly as possible.

Negative Pressure Tents—due to the contagiousness of the virus, we needed additional technology and space for safe diagnosis and treatment of potential COVID-19 patients. With the help of donors, we secured two negative pressure tents, along with other much-needed equipment.



Safety Drills—teams regularly reviewed infectious disease protocols and ran safety drills on all shifts to approximate what might happen during a surge.

But Not Without Cost.

I'm exceptionally proud of our organization for a thoughtful, collaborative and comprehensive response. Our extensive preparations, along with the community's cooperation with the shelter-in-place mandate, helped us avoid the initial surge in cases projected for our area. And we are well prepared to battle the ongoing threat. But none of these steps were expected or budgeted. We are left with a dramatic financial shortfall due to the necessary investment in technology, equipment, facilities and staff to combat the Coronavirus. Healthcare is the ONLY sector that has been hit doubly with the costs for COVID-19 and the loss of traditional income streams (all elective and non-emergent diagnostics and procedures were canceled to prepare for a surge). We received some help from the government but not nearly enough to offset the loss. Of course, our situation is not unique—it's industry wide. Health systems across the country are reeling under the pressure of the pandemic.



We Have a Plan and We're Taking Action.

Just as we came together to face COVID-19, we are now joining forces in earnest to face this financial crisis while maintaining our excellent standard of care. We are launching a multifaceted approach:

Reducing Expenses—we have every expense under the microscope to find savings without affecting our level of care. Maintaining staffing levels is of paramount importance, and we are doing everything we can to preserve jobs.

Building Revenue Opportunities—we are looking to expand services that generate revenue for the organization, and streamlining processes in others for more efficiency.

Reviewing Contracts—we are examining vendor contracts to make sure we have the best possible rates and plans.

Collaborating with Partners—we are continuing to evaluate existing and new healthcare partnerships to provide economies of scale.

Opening Our New Hospital—our new building will open soon, providing a state-of-the-art healing environment to accommodate more services and patients.

When we regained independence 10 years ago, we were faced with dire financial straits. We rose to the challenge then, and we are doing it again now. I am confident that we are doing everything we can for continued strength and success.

Show Your Support!

As an independent, community-supported organization, we also rely on help from donors to offset the costs of running a successful system. We are incredibly grateful to the many residents who have stepped up to assist over the years, and during this time specifically. We simply could not do it without you. We are committed to providing the exceptional care you expect and deserve. And we appreciate your trust and support as we move forward to meet the challenges that come.

To donate, visit www.MyMarinHealth.org/give