

Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Call Details

Facility: AHCC

Date and Time: 12/23/2020, 2:00PM

Attendees

- Kay Heinrich, Associate Superintendent
- Paige Perkinson, HQ
- Jess Robb, Family Secretary
- Jeremy Barclay, HQ
- Ann Wise, CPPC
- Kehaulani Walker, LFC Member
- Ellen Hargrove, LFC Member
- Christina Current, LFC Member
- April Chavis, LFC Member
- Sierra Baker, LFC Member
- Roberta Baker, LFC Member
- James Key, Superintendent
- Caitlin Robertson, OCO
- Stella Spracklin, OCO
- Gheorghe Turcin, Family Services
- Donna Jaramillo, Family Secretary
- Stephanie Colunga, LFC Member
- Julianne Presson, LFC Member
- Bill Hargrove, LFC Member
- Rachel Bisbee, LFC Member
- Teresa Golden, LFC Member
- Julie Burden, LFC Member

If you would like your friend/family member/loved one to be a part of the Local Family Council, please have them write to Jess Robb at the following email address:

Jessica.robbs@doc1.wa.gov

or

Jess Robb, Facility Secretary
Airway Heights Corrections Center
PO Box 1899
Airway Heights, WA 99001

To be part of the Local Family Council, one must be on the Incarcerated Individual's approved visitation list, and "any approved visitor in good standing may attend" (policy 530.155). If one is not on the inmate's visitation list and wishes to fill out an application to become a visitor please, go to the following website:

<https://www.doc.wa.gov/corrections/incarceration/visiting/prison-visits.htm>

- Questions need to be submitted to Ms. Robb by noon on Tuesday before the meeting. Please keep your questions, pre-submitted and during the call, to COVID-19 related topics.
- Please keep each question concrete and specific via bullet statements.

Weekly Update from Superintendent Key

- We have done 8694 staff serial tests to date. 76 have tested positive from serial testing. From outside testing and serial testing 167 staff have tested positive. There are 82 active cases and 85 recovered. We've had 6 staff test positive in the last 24 hours.
- There is a total of 1319 I/I who have tested positive. 156 have recovered, and there have been no new positive cases since yesterday. There are 565 tests pending, 0 inconclusive tests, and 1 death.
- There are a total of 1319 I/I on isolation.
 - RCF- 15
 - L Unit- 260
 - M Unit- 250
 - N Unit- 121
 - R unit B Side- 129

- T unit A side – 125
- T unit B side - 44
- REC (gym) - 144
- IPU - 4
- Segregation – 14
- MSU - 213
- Hospital watch - 1
 - L, M, and REC all have asymptomatic positive.
- There are a total of 634 I/I on quarantine.
 - K unit – 227
 - N unit B side - 61
 - R unit A side - 48
 - T unit B side - 36
 - IPU - 10
 - Segregation - 3
 - EFV's -11
 - MSU – 126
 - SMU Violators- 5
- Strategies and priorities for today as an institution are:
 - Communication with the population.
 - MSU video visits, 12 slots per unit (6 per each side).
 - MSU cohorting schedule is based on each tier for dayroom and outside yard access.
 - QA checklist for sanitation, laundry, cleaning supplies, PPE compliance and tone. This is a written document sent back to ICP.
 - We are still moving COVID positive from COVID negative. We are working on housing asymptomatic positives in T unit.
 - Health services is making sure all health checks are being accomplished.
 - Out of 156 recovered, we have some incarcerated working in CI commissary, laundry and food service. This has helped tremendously. I have received kites that the majority of I/I are excited to get back to work.
- I met with the JPay rep yesterday. They initially came on-site to do a site survey to look at adding WiFi to the RCF, gym, and possibly visiting. Instead, they went to M, L and K unit to make sure the Kiosks are working. We received reports that these areas are up and running. JPay representatives will be back on next Tuesday for the site survey for WIFI.
- We had 90 grievances in the MAIN since last Wednesday. They were in regards to questions about protocols, RCF and CRCC patients coming in, testing, test results back, lost wages in CI, late dinner and food. The MSU had three grievances about food, questions about quarantine/isolation status, and laundry.
- Quarterly packages will be delivered to all the units by tomorrow evening. Deliveries will happen today and be finished by end of the day tomorrow.
- I watched individuals in the MSU yard time. They were very excited. This helped the tone at the MSU.
- I worked with the business office. Every Monday they will print out the account balances of the I/I and we will deliver these to the living areas so they can get their account balance.
- There were some questions about mixing custody levels. These have all been approved by HQ. The MI3 and medium custody individuals intermix in all areas at AHCC. This occurred prior to COVID-19 which includes recreation, programming and working. Classification and PREA checks have been prior to each move made.
- We have goodie bags that we have put together and we will send these out to the population tomorrow morning.

Pre-Submitted Questions

Question

Do staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 still have to continue doing serial testing?

Answer

No. The current directives from DOC Headquarters is to not test anyone who has ever tested positive.

Question

Does every staff member get tested weekly?

Answer

Every staff member that comes on-site that has not tested positive in the past must be tested each week.

Question

How many staff on average get tested each week?

Answer

On average, we test 650 staff members each week.

Question

Are staff working in positive areas of the prison able to work in negative areas as well?

Answer

We answered this last week. Based on the low staffing levels, we have staff working in every unit and mandatory overtime. The PPE matrixes are followed. Each living unit has the correct PPE protocols posted for entering the unit.

Question

Why did it take two days to move a positive I/I at camp who was in a cell with a negative I/I?

Answer

Part of this was that we had I/I who were refusing to move and individuals refusing to eat. We did negotiations for about a day and a half. After this, most of the population understood and were willing to move. We spoke about dayroom use and yard access. MSU has quieted down significantly.

Question

Can you explain the plan to move I/I once their second COVID test comes back negative?

Answer

We are housing positive I/I and negatives together. If an individual continues to test negative they will remain in the quarantine area.

Question

After the 14 day isolation period, are you retesting I/I to make sure they are not still positive?

Answer

No. Per the CDC and the protocols from HQ "For persons previously diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who remain asymptomatic after recovery, retesting is not recommended within 3 months after the date of symptom onset for the initial COVID-19 infection."

Question

My son told me that on 12/17/20 at about 8:45 AM there were six extra officers at the K unit officer station. Could you please look into why this is happening?

Answer

I'm not sure why this would happen. We are still averaging about three different medical emergencies a day. It could be a response team, but the norm is not to congregate like this.

Question

When will the I/I in the gym be able to return to their unit?

Answer

This was answered last week. Once they go through the 14-day asymptomatic period, they are allowed to go to work. We are communicating with the individuals. We are trying to be conscious that some individuals want to go back to a unit and some individuals want to stay where they are. One of my goals is to not open any other alternate housing area. This will ultimately depend on the case amount that we have, and where we are at in operations.

Question

There are concerns that K unit is being asked to work in CI and move. Is this true?

Answer

Not at this time. We have talked about this previously that they may be used in CI. There has been no movement on K unit as of right now.

Question

What is being offered for exercise in the units since they are not allowed to stand or walk around?

Answer

Staff are letting I/I walk around. We also have exercise packets being passed out that they can do in cell.

Question

How many gentlemen would this virus have not hit so hard had they been provided exercise, fresh air, nutritional food, and showers when sick, etc. and without all the horrible, nonstop, undue stress put on them?

Answer

There is no way to determine this. This week there is no medical person on the call based on facility needs.

Question

How many beds are in the RCF?

Answer

30 beds in the RCF.

Question

Can you tell me how many individuals have been transferred to the RCF from other facilities, broken down by month and the facility they came from?

Answer

Not to this detail. As reported on 12/10 there were 156 I/I over the course of the pandemic. This number reflects both CRCC and WSP that were transferred.

Question

With the mandated staff cutbacks ordered by Gov. Inslee in March of 2020, were staff reassigned from Coyote Ridge or WSP to fill the vacancies during furloughs at AHCC?

Answer

No they were not.

Question

Is WADOC planning on continuing to transfer COVID positive I/I from other institutions to AHCC RCF? If so, what is the maximum amount of I/I that AHCC could take in from transfers?

Answer

Based on our outbreak, I have not seen many individuals transferring in. Our maximum is 30 in the RCF. Currently there are 15 in the RCF. These transfers are looked at by the HQ clinical team and the local clinical staff at AHCC. Based on HQ, there are no transfers going from institution to institution. On Dec. 28th, this will be reevaluated. This does not include the RCF.

Question

With medical staff being overwhelmed with the outbreak, how do I/I go about getting refills on their medications?

Answer

I would not say they are overwhelmed. They are working hard and finding proactive ways to get work done. An I/I will put the sticker from their KOP medication on a medical KITE and submit it to medical. Refills are ordered every day in medical. Our central pharmacy has also experienced a COVID outbreak and is short of staff. So, processing refills is at times taking longer. If they out, then we have to administer the medication from pill line, one dose at a time until the refill comes in.

Question

Has a decision been made on whether or not family members can mail in the medical release of information form?

Answer

I checked on this yesterday, and I do not have an answer back from HQ based on policy. I will do my best to get an answer to you by next Wednesday.

- **Update: Per HQ, these cannot be sent in by family members. However, we will be printing blank forms and placing them in the dayrooms for quicker availability to the incarcerated population.**

Question

Can you check on food still being delivered cold to the units?

Answer

I talked last week about food being delivered to the back of units. As of the 26th we are going to two cold meals and a hot for lunch for the entire institution. Hopefully this allows the hot meal to be received hot.

Question

Are positive I/I from the gym going back to work in the kitchen and food factory without being re-tested for COVID?

Answer

Yes. After the 14 day asymptomatic period, CDC guidelines are being followed.

Question

When can I/I who went to gym get their JPay players back?

Answer

Most have received their JPay players. We are doing the site survey on Tuesday to try and get WIFI in that area so they can use those JPay players.

Additional Questions

Question

I read the memo about Sage East at CRCC for staff and inmates there to receive the vaccine. Why hasn't K unit been identified as high risk to receive the vaccination?

Answer

HQ is not looking at K unit as a protected unit anymore. I know there are medical conversations happening today for staff and I/I. Nothing has been established for who is receiving these vaccinations first. I can't speak for Coyote Ridge.

Question

If there is a video visit already scheduled, will that stay in place if it fits the new schedule? When is new schedule starting and has staff been told this is okay?

Answer

We revised C4 and C5 to meet cohort and isolation schedules. It's my understanding that JPay has these schedules and they would be sending out something to the families about this. This information has already gone to the staff.

Question

How many individuals have tested positive in K unit A side and K unit B side?

Answer

If any individuals have tested positive they would have been moved out to another area.

Question

Outside movement has been taken away, and I/I have been told they are not allowed to stand or exercise. There is a posting in L unit and they are being verbally told they cannot exercise.

Answer

We have exercise packets that are distributed. I have watched L unit on the cameras and I see people walking around the dayrooms. They have regular dayroom access. I am not aware of anyone telling them they can't exercise, but I will take a look at this next week.

- **Update from L-Unit CUS: I/I are allowed to exercise, but not allowed to walk around the dayroom in groups.**

Question

My husband is positive for COVID-19. I strongly believe this could have been prevented. I'm having a hard time understanding that people refused to move out their tiers and that people wanted to move but couldn't. If there is an I/I positive in a positive tier, but they continue to put new positive cases in the same tier, how do they get through the 14 day period if it just keeps restarting with new individuals?

Answer

Your husband would be placed on medical isolation, not quarantine. Each individual is on their own schedule and are tracked differently. Those folks are allowed out in the dayroom with phone access and they are getting fresh air. They will also be able to sign up for video visits. I understand this is difficult for everyone.

Question

As far as the guys who are positive in C5, weren't they moved into the dorm areas? Is anyone allowed to make phone calls?

Answer

There is a cohort schedule for each tier. In these times they can come out and make phone calls.

Question

I was told that there are officers in the gym not wearing their masks. Why are the officers not wearing their masks?

Answer

I have been watching the gym and units on a daily basis. In the gym, since they are all positive, the I/I do not have to wear their masks. It is still my expectation for masks for staff. We'll look into this.

- **Update from unit SGT: I have never seen an Officer enter a tier without appropriate PPE. I have never seen Officers within 6' of each other without a surgical mask, there are only three places in the unit that Officers could eat. The front desk where unit video is monitored 24/7, the office, or the staff break room. In those places I have seen Officers lower their masks to drink or eat.**

Question

With so many I/I dispersed throughout other areas and total positive cases reaching a new high, and since there are beds empty in the main, is it looking like individuals in other areas could make it back to a cell?

Answer

We are continuing to separate positive and negatives. As we move others, I want I/I to have the same amenities in those other areas that they do in the units. Individuals who are residing in the gym may not always want to go back to units with a cohort schedule for less use of phones, etc.

Question

When an I/I asks the officer a question or shares a concern and they can't get any response or help, what do they do? How do they express their concerns and how do I respond to my son?

Answer

I take this very seriously. You can write me an email with the information you have and I will investigate this.

Question

I read the vaccine memo. Are there sign ups to receive these? Would you start with the negative I/I first?

Answer

That will be a clinical decision. The population will be evaluated based on medical needs.

Question

May you guide me to whom I can speak where the protocol of how you will manage those who tested positive, and you continue to bring in more COVID positive individuals in the same area, when will they be released? I hope you can understand us as humans, you say they have access to phones, but there are 35-45 on a tier. Where can I find the protocol?

Answer

If you can send us your question regarding this, I will hopefully have a medical staff here to answer your questions next week.

Question

I know that before COVID started, K unit was considered high risk. Is that still the case? Why was K unit set up as special unit to start with?

Answer

No it is not. In a previous meeting, I talked about going to HQ ICP stating that we have the same amount of acuity in K unit. Based on the review from HQ, we were getting ready to step down K unit. Then we had the outbreak. K unit is not on a protected status. It has the same acuity rate of any other unit. That is what HQ and the clinical team thought was best in the beginning. Based on the documentation, moving forward they have been stepped down.

Question

Could they rethink the options being chosen for the holiday meal as those two options are the least liked through the entire institution?

Answer

These are the meals that has been approved through CI. I have heard both pros and cons with this as I do any meal.

Question

Is the laundry schedule still roughly twice a week? Or has it changed with more I/I?

Answer

It was twice a week. The hope is that with more I/I going back to work they can increase laundry delivery.

Question

The way that MSU is set up is that they can either use the phone or go outside. Can it be set up so they can have those at separate times?

Answer

The schedule goes through each day of the week and for each tier so everyone has an opportunity. I don't have this schedule in front of me. I understand this is a choice. I am just trying to get individuals out as much as they can and still keep cohorting schedules for each tier.

Question

Regarding the negatives in the MSU, are you continuing to check them each week? Are the positives always going to be on one side and the negatives on the other?

Answer

As far as the stabilization at the MSU, there may be moves as we wait for tests results. We were able to not move individuals to the gym. If you send a specific clinical question, I will do my best to get the answer and have a medical individual on the call.

Question

What are the plans for the "long haulers"? Those who tested positive in the beginning and are still having symptoms? My husband tested positive and is still having symptoms. Most of it attributed to his age and medical conditions. What happens when the period of time is over and individuals have long lasting symptoms?

Answer

Based on meetings with medical, sometimes symptoms last longer with some individuals than others. When he's ready, and based on the protocols, he will move. As long as he has symptoms, he may be in there longer, but will continue to receive that medical care.

Question

How many positives I/I are in camp?

Answer

We have 213 on isolation in the camp.

Comments/Closing

I appreciate your time and questions. I acknowledge the frustration. We are working hard to follow the protocol and guidelines. We are still working with reduced staff. There are many different memos being sent out. Please continue to review those. We are hoping for a peak with the numbers and to start moving the other way. Have a happy holiday this week, and we will speak with you next Wednesday.