

## Community Memorial Health Center Education and Update

Community Memorial Health center will continue to educate on the standards Long Term Care is being held to at this point of the Pandemic. CMS has recently added to their regulations on family/friend's "visitation". The additional standards are based on **when** visitations can/cannot occur.

Long Term Care facilities now use the County Positivity rate. Community Memorial is located in Garfield County (population 1,987) with Burwell being the only community in the county. This poses as a hurdle because the amount of people getting tested is heavily factored into the county positivity rate for 14 days.

The guidelines are as follows:

Low- below 5%= Visitation occurs

Medium- between 5%-10%= Visitation occurs

**High- higher than 10%= Visitation is halted**

Example- If only 20 tests in Garfield County in 14 days are completed and 3 of them are positive, then CMHC has to shut back down fully again ( $3/20=15\%$ )!

Not only does the county positivity rate affect visitation but it also affects Staff Routine testing as issued by CMS.

The guidelines are as follows:

Low- below 5%= Test 1x monthly

Medium- between 5%-10%= Test 1x weekly

**High- higher than 10%= Test 2x weekly**

The reasoning behind this is to keep the Pandemic out of the facilities as our population is most at risk. CMS has issued this nationwide to all Long-Term Care Facilities. CMHC was hoping to use the staff test results from our CMS purchased Antigen testing machine, to contribute to county positivity rate. Unfortunately, CMS will not recognize these tests into the positivity rate. We see only one option to help our residents, families and staff. We need the community of Burwell's help to have more testing completed in Garfield County to both help identify a possible outbreak and impact the positivity rate.

Loup Basin Public Health Department will start offering COVID19 testing through Test Nebraska. Their first testing will start on **OCTOBER 8<sup>th</sup>** from 1pm-3pm. Testing will take place on Mondays and Thursdays thereafter. Please go to **[testnebraska.com](https://testnebraska.com)** or call **308-346-5795** to get signed up.