

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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# OBJECTIVES:

- What is COVID-19?
- Flattening the curve and decision to re-open the economy?
- Company policy changes to limit COVID risk.
- Company plan during the re-opening
  - Employee COVID-19 testing
    - Nasal Swab for diagnosis of COVID-19 disease
    - Antibody testing for determination of Immunity to COVID-19
  - Employee wellness screening

# SITUATION: THE FACTS

## What is COVID-19?

- Human coronaviruses are a family of viruses that typically cause the common cold
- Coronaviruses are typically seasonal. Like influenza, they circulate in fall and winter
- Unknown if COVID-19 will fit the typical seasonal pattern
- People become sick enough to be hospitalized and some die

# SITUATION: THE FACTS

## What is a pandemic?

- Global outbreak of a disease
- Occurs when a new virus emerges to infect people and spreads between people sustainably
- The virus spreads world-wide because no one has pre-existing immunity

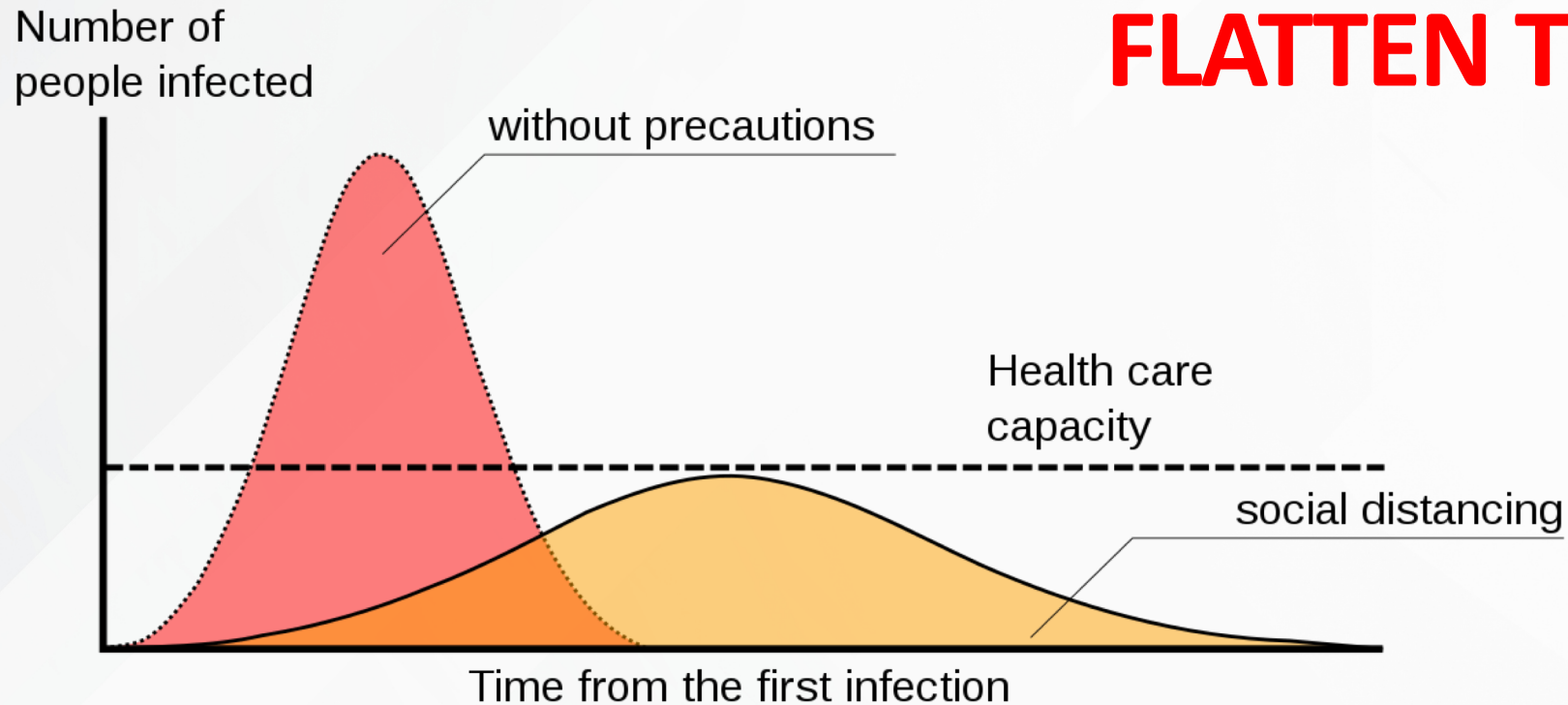
## Why is COVID-19 spreading so quickly and why is it dangerous?

- Most respiratory viruses affect the upper part of the respiratory system **OR** the lower part of the respiratory system
- COVID-19 affects both
- Upper respiratory illnesses spread easily and are usually not serious (colds)
- Lower respiratory illnesses don't spread easily and are usually serious (pneumonia)



# SITUATION: THE FACTS

- More people will get the virus, but taking precautions helped prevent a massive spike in cases, ensuring we have the capacity to care for our communities.



## FLATTEN THE CURVE

# **SITUATION:** SYMPTOMS

## **What are symptoms of COVID-19?**

- Fever
- Dry Cough
- Shortness of breath

## **Who does COVID-19 affect?**

- The older you are the more serious the infection
- Vast majority of those infected have mild symptoms
- People who have chronic medical conditions (heart disease, diabetes, lung disease)
- Global mortality rates are higher than seasonal influenza

# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Education

- Education on COVID-19 and the symptoms associated with this disease.
- Encourage workers to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Encourage individuals to stay home if they are ill.
- Provide a simple pathway to report illness quickly and clear steps to be allowed home quickly.
- Up-to-date education and staff training promoting frequent hand washing.
- Encourage proper respiratory hygiene by covering coughs and sneezes.
- Stop handshaking-use other noncontact methods of greeting.
- Discourage workers from using other worker's phones, desks, offices, and work tools.
- Encourage social distancing

# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Worksite preparation

- Have soap and running water to help workers and visitors wash their hands frequently.
- If you are unable to provide soap and water, ensure alcohol-based hand rubs with at least 60% alcohol.
- Provide employees and visitors with tissue and trash receptacles.
- Re-organize your work spaces to increase the distance between employees to decrease the risk of spreading COVID-19.
- Insert physical barriers- Plexiglas between desks if unable to increase distance.
- Close common meeting/eating areas.
- Designate traffic flow in the workplace- one entry and one exit.
- Avoid handling of credit or ID cards for transactions- allow privacy for verbalization of card numbers

# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Company policies

- Ensure flexible sick leave policies, including permission to stay home with sick family members.
- Encourage employees to work from home if possible.
- Replace face-to-face meetings with video-conferencing.
- Stop all non-essential travel.
- Stagger shifts so less people are on-site at any given time.
- Don't require a sick note before allowing individuals to be off work.
- Share your response plans and clearly communicate expectations.

# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Emergency actions

- Quickly identify and isolate sick individuals.
- Move them away from other workers and customers.
- You may not have an isolation room, but designate a room in advance with doors that can be closed and that is away from other people until the ill person can be removed from your site.



# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Environmental cleaning practices

- Close off areas used by sick people, open outside windows and doors to increase air circulation, wait 24 hours to clean and disinfect if possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by sick people such as offices, bathrooms, shared equipment (like tablets, keyboards, and remote controls).
- While cleaning, wear disposable gloves and gowns. Wash with soap and water immediately after removing gloves and gowns.
- Disinfect and clean common work spaces routinely: offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment with extra emphasis on tables, door knobs, light switches, handles, desks, phones and keyboards.
- Clean hard surfaces with soap and water and disinfect using household bleach solutions for appropriate surfaces (to make a bleach solution mix 5 tablespoons of bleach per gallon of water), or use alcohol solutions with 70% alcohol, or use regular household cleaners and disinfectants. Remove objects with soft surfaces as they are difficult to clean and disinfect.



# CALL TO ACTION: COMPANY POLICIES

## Special situation with high risk employees with chronic medical conditions.

- Individuals who are 65 years of age or older, or individuals with chronic health problems like heart disease , lung disease, diabetes, or those who have poor immune systems are more likely to develop serious illness if they develop COVID-19 infection.
- These individuals need to avoid the risk of coming into contact with COVID-19. The best options is to have high-risk employees stay home. If that is not possible, we recommend they get reassigned to an area where they are not exposed to other people – both customers and coworkers – by having them work in an isolated area.

# CALL TO ACTION: TESTING OPTIONS

- Nasal Swab PCR testing-
  - Checks for the presence of COVID-19 RNA in the respiratory tract
  - Indicates: Do you have the disease now or recently (~10 days) - YES or NO
  - You can be negative today yet in a few days you can develop COVID-19 infection and have a positive test if you are in contact with an infected person and are incubating the disease.

# CALL TO ACTION: TESTING OPTIONS

- Antibody Serology testing-
  - Blood test checking for antibodies to COVID-19
  - The presence of antibodies normally indicates immunity to a disease
  - Testing was approved through emergency process
  - There are 4 types of tests and there are problems with test specificity
  - There is only 40% chance that a positive antibody test means immunity
  - Should **not be** used to decide on individual immunity- research/ population studies for now
  - May be an option in a few weeks to months as test improves

# CALL TO ACTION: DAILY WELLNESS SCREENING

- Implement daily screening for all workers:
  - Screen prior to entry into the facility.
  - Provide verbal screening in appropriate language(s) to determine whether workers have had a fever, felt feverish, or had chills, coughing, or difficulty breathing in the past 24 hours.
  - Check temperatures of workers at the start of each shift to identify anyone with a fever of 100.4°F or greater (or reported feelings of feverishness). Ensure that screeners: are trained to use infra-red thermometers and monitors are accurate under conditions of use (such as cold temperatures); and wear appropriate PPE.
  - Do not let employees enter the workplace if they have a fever of 100.4°F or greater (or reported feelings of feverishness), or if screening results indicate that the worker is suspected of having COVID-19.

# CALL TO ACTION: DAILY WELLNESS SCREENING

- Ensure that personnel performing screening activities, including temperature checks, are appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious workers entering the facility.
- Implement engineering controls, such as physical barriers or dividers or rope and stanchion systems, to maintain at least six feet of distance between screeners and workers being screened.
- If screeners need to be within six feet of workers, provide them with appropriate PPE based on the repeated close contact the screeners have with other workers.

# CALL TO ACTION: DAILY WELLNESS SCREENING

- Such PPE may include gloves, a gown, a face shield, and, at a minimum, a face mask.
- N95 filtering face piece respirators (or more protective) may be appropriate for workers performing screening duties and necessary for workers managing a sick employee in the work environment if that employee has signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
- If respirators are needed, they must be used in the context of a comprehensive respiratory protection program that includes medical exams, fit testing, and training in accordance with OSHA's Respiratory Protection.



# CALL TO ACTION: DAILY WELLNESS SCREENING

- Encourage workers to self-isolate and contact a healthcare provider.
- Provide information on your facility's return to work policies and procedures.
- Inform human resources and supervisor so the worker can be moved off the schedule during illness and a replacement assigned.



# CALL TO ACTION: RETURN TO WORK

- A sick employee with COVID-19 may consider returning to work after 3 fever-free days have passed without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol **AND**
- There is improvement in their respiratory symptoms such as less cough and improved shortness of breath **AND**
- At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared, and symptoms have not worsened or expanded.

**Employees in contact with others with COVID-19 need a 14 day self-quarantine.**

# CALL TO ACTION: RETURN TO WORK

- What steps should we take if an employee has COVID-19?
- Keep it confidential. This is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Inform close contacts of the sick employee that they may have been in close to someone with COVID-19.
- Your state health department will investigate positive cases including contact tracing of COVID positive individuals.

QUESTIONS ?