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MEDIA ALERT:

RMC Health System Opens Drive-Thru Coronavirus (COVID-19) Screening Site

(Anniston, AL) – March 18, 2020 - Northeast Alabama Regional Medical Center (RMC) today opened a drive-thru Coronavirus (COVID-19) screening and specimen collection center at 230 E 10th Street, in the parking lot of the Medical Arts Building. The drive-thru testing facility is designated ONLY for patients who have been referred for testing by their primary care health provider.

“We are requiring that patients first be evaluated by their healthcare provider to determine if they are a candidate for testing,” said Louis Bass, CEO of RMC. “We have a very limited amount of testing kits and are trying to conserve the limited supply for those patients that are in most need of testing. Health care providers will use designated screening criteria to determine if a referral to the screening clinic is necessary.”

Local physicians have received instructions from RMC on the protocol to follow to send a referral for a patient to be received. Once RMC receives a patient referral, they will have dedicated resources to pre-register and schedule a patient for a potential screening slot. Patients will be contacted by RMC with appointment availability and instructions.

Symptoms and current testing criteria for COVID-19 include the following:

- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath).

RMC will have a limited number of tests available each day and may have to make changes to our schedule based on that availability and demand, according to Bass.

“The drive-thru screening site will be staffed M-F from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm with a RMC provider that will review the referral received from a primary care physician and reassess to confirm that a patient meets testing criteria,” Bass said. “But it’s important to note that if a patient does not meet the testing criteria, they will not be tested.”

Current turnaround time for COVID-19 test results has averaged between five and seven days. RMC will contact a patient and their healthcare provider directly if a positive test result is returned. Patients will also receive instructions at the drive thru screening site on how to sign up for Chartfast.com to access their results.

For questions regarding this process, please contact RMC Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm at 256-238-5600.

Official Resources:

CDC recommendations for Workplace and Commercial establishments best practices: <https://www.cdc.gov/.../workplace-school-and-home-guidance.pdf>

CDC COVID-19 Information <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

<http://alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/2019-coronavirus.html>

For more information, visit www.RMCcares.org

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