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Director

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Health Officer

May 1, 2020

HEALTH ORDER
Discharge from Acute Care Facility to Long Term Care Facility

In view of recent outbreaks in surrounding counties, the Merced County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) is committed to taking critical steps to ensure residents who are most at risk for the severe consequences of communicable diseases, including Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), are protected.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in healthcare facilities, specifically Chronic and Convalescent Nursing Homes and Rest Homes with Nursing Supervision (Long Term Care Facilities), effective immediately, the Merced County Department of Public Health Officer is **directing** the following:

1. All patients being discharged from an Acute Care Facility to a Long Term Care Facilities must be tested for COVID-19 within 72 hours of discharge. The test result must be received by the acute care facility and shared with the receiving Long Term Care Facility.
2. Long Term Care Facilities cannot deny receipt/transfer of a patient based on COVID status; results are for planning purposes so patient can be isolated as appropriate.

This directive is intended as a screening, not diagnostic, order. MCDPH is **not** requiring or recommending that all individuals tested per this directive are placed in isolation protocol, or placed on COVID positive floors. Doing so could inadvertently increase the risk of transmission to this vulnerable population.

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