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2020-03-20 A Message from Chancellor Roth

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

We are facing an unprecedented challenge, one that still poses many unknowns. But as this pandemic progresses, we are gaining new insights into the behavior of the novel coronavirus, which are reshaping policy recommendations about how we operate.

The New Mexico Department of Health reported today that 43 New Mexicans have tested positive for the coronavirus and nearly 3814 tests have been administered statewide.

Here is an update on the measures we are taking at The University of New Mexico to prevent new infections:

- Effective 8 a.m. Saturday, no visitors will be admitted UNM Hospital, with the few exceptions you can [see here](#). I know this places a burden on our patients and their loved ones, but it is a necessary measure to lessen potential exposure of our patients and health care workers to the coronavirus.
- To assure the safety and well-being of our students, we have also decided to temporarily restrict the presence of students in our research facilities; student access will need to be paused as they will not be allowed in research laboratories, working on clinical trials, or performing in-person community-based research effective Monday March 23, 2020. Read more about this below.

- We are making huge progress with finding child care options for our Tier 1 employees – those employees performing vital functions, such as clinical duties, who need assistance in finding child care while at work on campus or in clinics and hospitals. I want to thank Jessica Kelly, my deputy chief of staff, for her work on this. If you are a Tier 1 employee who needs these services please contact Jessica at JesKelly@salud.unm.edu.
- Some of the evidence-based strategies employed to limit the spread of the virus (such as social distancing) might seem unduly onerous, but they have already proven their efficacy in other parts of the world. So if you are not a Tier 1 employee, please follow the expert advice to Just Stay Home.

I believe we at the HSC can set an example for our neighbors by making sure that we implement these practices in our daily lives.

Warm regards,



Paul B. Roth, MD, MS
Chancellor for Health Sciences
CEO, UNM Health System
Dean, UNM School of Medicine

Message on Research Facilities Restricted Access

“The University of New Mexico is closely monitoring the outbreak of coronavirus COVID-19 and any public health concerns in our state. We are aligning our activity with the Governor, State Department of Health and other agencies. We must all ensure that the actions we take protect our society, especially those underserved and in need of aid, are taken with the utmost urgency. Infected individuals shed virus before they become symptomatic, and apparently for some days post-recovery. To reduce epidemic spread, we have to reduce gatherings of individuals, which we all endorse and are already practicing, and minimize the migration of individuals into and out of our community, which

limits the migration of the virus. **To assure the safety and well-being of our students, we have also decided to temporarily restrict the presence of students in our research facilities; student access will need to be paused as they will not be allowed in research laboratories, working on clinical trials, or performing in-person community based research effective Monday March 23, 2020.** This will remain in effect for 2 weeks until April 5, 2020. Students will continue to be able to work remotely. We are committed to assuring that our students will graduate and we will be assessing the situation closely over the next 2 weeks and providing additional guidance. We recognize that there may be extenuating situations in which a student may have to come on campus for a short period of time and both main campus and HSC will have processes to request exceptions for limited presence.”