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2020-04-09 A Message from Chancellor Roth

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HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

As of this afternoon, 989 New Mexicans have tested positive for the novel coronavirus and 17 patients have died. Nearly 24,000 tests have been administered. Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

With the number of diagnosed patients continuing to increase, I want you to know we are redoubling preparations, both within our Health System and in conjunction with health officials and other health systems around the state, for an expected surge of new cases in the next few weeks. At the same time, we are beginning to see what I like to think of as a glimmer of hope, as our state's doubling rates start to slow down thanks to the continued, diligent efforts of New Mexicans staying at home and social distancing when we need to step out.

You all have been working incredibly hard over the past few weeks, and many challenges undoubtedly lie ahead of us. I want you to know that your efforts make a difference – and are deeply appreciated.

Meanwhile, I'd like to thank Robert C. Schenck, MD, chair of our Department of Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation, for agreeing to step in as interim Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs for the Health Sciences Center. He'll be assisting Dr. Mike Richards in fulfilling some of his duties related to the Health System while Dr. Richards, MD, is on detail chairing the state's COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team. This will continue for the duration of the public health emergency.

I received a message from Ellen Copen, LPCC, who works for Jail Diversion Case Management Services (a community-based program of the UNM Psychiatric Center), who

shared how the program's community support workers (CSWs) are continuing to help adult clients living with mental illness to stay out of jail and progress in their recovery.

"The team of nine CSWs, led by their supervisor, Stacey Boone, continue to help our clients in the face of many community services being shut down, and they are doing it with grace and compassion," Ellen writes. "They continue to check on them in their homes, transport them to medical appointments, and find creative ways to help them in the face of so many barriers at this time... I am humbled beyond words at their dedication and selfless service. They deserve to be recognized."

I agree. Thank you

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul B. Roth".

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