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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

It was announced during Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's news conference yesterday that antibody tests for the COVID-19 will soon become available in New Mexico. This testing is to determine if someone has immunity to COVID-19. I know there is a great deal of public interest in testing, and there has been some confusion surrounding its use.

The antibody tests will be in short supply for the foreseeable future, so those tests are prioritized for a limited number of subjects, primarily those enrolled in a clinical trial of patients who have recovered from the virus and may be eligible to donate plasma. Antibody testing will also be ordered for patients who are hospitalized and where the test will help in the patient's diagnosis. There will not be antibody testing available for the general public.

As you may know, research is underway to determine whether plasma from recovered patients can help those who are acutely ill with the virus. The New Mexico Department of Health will be posting guidance on its website for the public and health care providers that further clarifies this policy.

We also continue to work on treatment options. We are very appreciative of our congressional delegation fighting to help us secure Remdesivir. As some of you know, the clinical trial with the limited supply of the drug went very well and that patient has recovered from COVID-19. We continue to work to secure this treatment for our patients and our community.

Earlier this week, I received a question regarding the application process for students wishing to enroll for the Fall 2020 semester, particularly with the measures being taken to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Amy Levi, PhD, CNM, our Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, advises that UNM is accepting applications for the Fall semester via its [website](#), and student advisors are available to answer any questions related to applications.

“The Provost’s office is still working out the details as to whether or not (and how much) the content will be delivered online,” she writes. “At the current time there is no interest in limiting enrollments, although some class sizes will be decreased for on-campus attendance.”

Throughout this pandemic we have had multiple emergency operations centers and an incident management team meeting each day to assess the latest information and continually engage in detailed planning to adapt our operations accordingly. I want to express my gratitude for the hard work of everyone who has contributed to this effort.

I do want to say that I am encouraged by the data and virus model trends. We continue to be very concerned and are lending our support to the hard-hit areas of the state. We are hoping this good news continues and could lead to even more relaxation of the restrictions. For now, please continue to stay home and social distance. We are all doing our part to save lives.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul B. Roth".

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

Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest COVID-19 updates.