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2020-05-11 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:

A few weeks back we announced the launch of clinical trials of potential drug therapies to treat COVID-19 infections. One, an antiviral medication called remdesivir, has already shown promising results, and it has received emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Unfortunately, remdesivir is in very short supply around the country. So I'm encouraged by the announcement that the United States Department of Health and Human Services will begin distributing remdesivir to each state. We are grateful for the constant advocacy of Governor Lujan Grisham on behalf of our state and the unflagging commitment of Senator Martin Heinrich and Representatives Ben Ray Luján and Debra Haaland to ensure a supply was made available to treat our sickest and most vulnerable New Mexicans.

As a small, rural state, it is easy to be overlooked, but our elected officials have collaborated on behalf of New Mexicans to ensure that does not happen. We're grateful for their hard work in helping us make this drug treatment available to severely ill patients in New Mexico. It's also a badly needed tool for our frontline health care providers.

In other developments, it has been eight weeks since The University of New Mexico moved to limited operations, reducing the number of employees present on campus. University leaders are studying how to resume something approaching normal operations while also maintaining social distancing and other measures that have been demonstrated to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus. This will be done through a phased-in process to protect the safety of our University community.

Guideline principles underpinning our strategies for return to campus plans are the same as those stated nationally and locally during our public health emergency. The top priority is to

reduce the spread of this virus. We will follow proven methods that assure the safety of our HSC community while maintaining critical operational functions. As data becomes available to show the threat of spread of the virus has lessened, then the on-campus presence of faculty, staff and students will increase in a phased and careful manner. We did put out guidance this afternoon about [travel and food purchase restrictions](#).

Many of us who are working from home are also having to care for, entertain, and homeschool our children, which makes this week's Well-Being Connection presentation especially timely. Parenting During COVID-19, a Zoom webinar offered by clinical psychologist Cynthia Langtiw, PsyD, will be presented on **Wednesday, May 13, from 12:15 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.** You can register for the presentation [here](#). It's available to all HSC employees.

Finally, please join me in congratulating UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center for being included in the Albuquerque Journal's Best Workplaces in New Mexico rankings. The recognition is much deserved.

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.