

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2020

Contact: HHS Press Office

202-690-6343

media@hhs.gov

HHS Awards More than Half Billion Dollars Across the Nation to Expand COVID-19 Testing

Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), awarded nearly \$583 million to 1,385 HRSA-funded health centers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and eight U.S. territories to expand COVID-19 testing. Nearly 88 percent of HRSA-funded health centers report testing patients, with more than 65 percent offering walk-up or drive-up testing. Health centers are currently providing more than 100,000 weekly COVID-19 tests in their local communities.

Today's funding for health centers is part of the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, signed into law by President Trump on April 24th. The legislation provides funding for small businesses and individuals financially affected by COVID-19, additional funding for hospitals and healthcare providers, and increased testing capabilities to help track the spread and impact of the coronavirus.

"This new funding secured by President Trump will expand the work health centers are doing to test Americans for COVID-19," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "Widespread testing is a critical step in reopening America, and health centers are vital to making testing easily accessible, especially for underserved and minority populations. Further, because health centers can help notify contacts of patients who test positive, they will continue playing an important role in cooperating with state and local public health departments."

HRSA-funded health centers will use this funding to expand the range of testing and testing-related activities to best address the needs of their local communities, including the purchase of personal protective equipment; training for staff, outreach, procurement and administration of tests; laboratory services; notifying identified contacts of infected health center patients of their exposure to COVID-19; and the expansion of walk-up or drive-up testing capabilities.

"Health centers are a first line of defense, as they are testing for coronavirus and delivering high-quality primary care to our nation's most vulnerable populations." said HRSA Administrator Tom Engels. "In the fight against COVID-19, we must marshal all of our resources to keep Americans healthy and care for those who become ill."

Today's investments build upon the \$1.42 billion HRSA has awarded to health centers to address COVID-19, which will bring the Trump Administration's total COVID-19 investment in health centers to nearly \$2 billion.

For a list of award recipients, visit <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/emergency-response/expanding-capacity-coronavirus-testing-FY2020-awards>.

To learn more about health center capacity and the impact of COVID-19 on health center operations, patients and staff, visit <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/emergency-response/coronavirus-health-center-data>.

For more information about COVID-19, visit <http://coronavirus.gov/>.

###