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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Adirondack Health, Trudeau Institute partner on COVID-19 test supplies

SARANAC LAKE – Late last week, Adirondack Health received 2,000 COVID-19 test kits developed and manufactured at Trudeau Institute, which expanded testing capacity at Adirondack Medical Center’s COVID-19 clinic by nearly 1,000 percent.

The timing of this delivery could not have been better, having come shortly after the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) issued guidance that widened the criteria for COVID-19 testing to include 40 categories of “essential workers.” This significant number of new test kits is helping the hospital to meet those new testing guidelines.

In adherence to the latest NYS DOH guidance, clinicians at Adirondack Health updated their testing algorithm, a complex flow chart that lays out which kinds of patients with which kinds of symptoms get tested, and how. Like surrounding North Country hospitals, Adirondack Health had previously limited COVID-19 testing to those individuals with symptoms severe enough to be admitted to Adirondack Medical Center as inpatients, due to the limited availability of test kits nationally.

“Thanks to our close working relationship with Trudeau Institute and its president, Dr. Atsuo Kuki, we are able to test for COVID-19 on a much larger scale in Franklin and Essex counties,” said Sylvia Getman, Adirondack Health president and CEO. “Dr. Kuki and his team are not only helping to keep our staff safe by assisting in the sterilization of our N95 and surgical masks, but also helping to keep our communities safe by producing this critical viral transport media for COVID-19 test specimens.”

Trudeau Institute and Adirondack Health began collaborating on a response to the pandemic last month, when Trudeau dedicated lab space to sterilize masks for frontline healthcare workers, using vaporized hydrogen peroxide. That collaboration led to a discussion concerning the health system’s difficulties sourcing COVID-19 test kits, and specifically, viral transport media, or VTM – the liquid in which test specimens are sent to laboratories for analysis.

“Our researchers are accustomed to being on the front line of global scientific research – but being able to contribute so close to home is especially meaningful,” said Dr. Atsuo Kuki, director and president of Trudeau Institute. “Over the past two months, we’ve refocused much of our energy on this fight against the coronavirus pandemic. We are pleased to partner with our neighbors at Adirondack Health to combat COVID-19 and stand ready to assist our North Country friends and neighbors in any way we can.”



If you feel you may have contracted COVID-19 and are experiencing symptoms including fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath, please contact your primary care provider to discuss the value of having a test ordered at Adirondack Medical Center's COVID clinic. If you are an essential worker looking to be tested for COVID-19, you are invited to contact the COVID clinic directly at 518-897-2462 to schedule a test. All tests are by appointment only, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To learn more, visit adirondackhealth.org/coronavirus and trudeauinstitute.org/covid19. General questions about COVID-19 should be directed to the New York State Department of Health COVID-19 hotline: 888-364-3065.

ABOUT ADIRONDACK HEALTH

Adirondack Health is the family of facilities and individuals who have provided sophisticated care to the Adirondack region of northern New York and beyond for more than 100 years. They include: Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake, Lake Placid Health and Medical Fitness Center, Keene Health Center, Saranac Lake Health Center, Tupper Lake Health Center, St. Regis Falls Health Center, Mercy Living Center in Tupper Lake and Adirondack Health Dental Care in Lake Placid. The highly trained and compassionate individuals working at these facilities provide a full range of medical, surgical and long-term care services. Adirondack Health is the only full-service health system in the Adirondack Park.

Adirondack Health is not only the leading provider of healthcare for the residents and visitors of the Adirondack region, it is also the largest private employer in the Adirondack Park. In addition to the physical and social health of the community, Adirondack Health plays a significant role in the economic health of the community. With more than 800 full-time employees, Adirondack Health has a \$169 million annual impact on the local economy. As a result of these factors, and more, Adirondack Health is a key community institution and an advocate for improving the health and economic well-being of the patients, residents, businesses and visitors it serves.

To learn more about the programs and services of Adirondack Health, visit adirondackhealth.org.