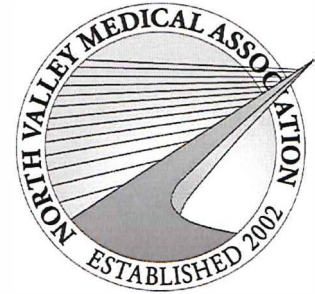




Shasta County Health & Human Services Agency



July 28, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Joint Statement from North Valley Medical Association (NVMA) Board of Directors and Shasta County Public Health

We are appealing to all providers in Shasta County to do your part, as leaders in our community, to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep yourselves, your staff and your patients safe.

Please practice and promote the 3 W's in your office/clinic and community settings:

- Wear a face mask/covering
- Watch your distance and avoid gatherings
- Wash your hands

The future of reopening our economy and returning to school this fall is dependent on our community embracing the 3Ws.

Shasta County, along with the entire United States, is in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Although our positive cases in the county may seem low compared to many urban areas in the state, we have gone from our first case on March 8 to more than 400 cases in early August, now averaging over 10 new cases each day, and quadrupled between mid-June and mid-July.

There are estimates of 6 to 10 times more actual cases in a community than what the PCR test results reveal, yet still well below the 21,000 cases of severe COVID-19 that would need to occur to reach infection rates necessary for herd immunity in Shasta County. With up to 45% of cases being asymptomatic, and with virus spread also occurring before people have symptoms, isolating people with symptoms or positive test results will not by itself prevent transmission of COVID-19.

SARS-CoV-2 is a novel coronavirus that moved from an animal to humans, so we have no inherent immunity, there is yet no vaccine, there are limited therapeutic options and supplies, and there are no antiviral drugs that can be used to prevent or treat this infection in the outpatient setting.

The evidence for face mask/face covering use both as source control to keep you from spreading if you are infected, and to keep you from getting it from another is clear from multiple sources. An interesting brief article on this from UCSF is <https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2020/06/417906/still-confused-about-masks-heres-science-behind-how-face-masks-prevent>

As healthcare providers, we want to care for our patients and protect them from harm. Our Hippocratic Oath compels us to "first do no harm." Many of our patients are vulnerable because of their age and medical conditions and are at high risk for serious infection or even death if infected with this virus.

The Shasta County Public Health Branch has received complaints from patients visiting medical offices that are not social distancing in the office waiting areas and that other patients, office staff and even medical providers are not wearing masks. There is no way to know if staff, providers, or other patients in these offices could have COVID-19 and might spread it to patients or staff.

Please do your part to protect your patients and office staff and practice the 3 W's.

Sincerely,



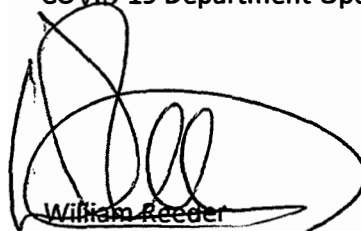
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