



News Release

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Local Health Care Organizations Combine Forces to Set-up a Tri-County COVID Medical Center

Five health care organizations in western Minnesota are taking a proactive stance in preparation of the number of COVID-19 cases that could occur in the communities they serve. Appleton Area Health (Appleton, MN), CCM Health (Montevideo, MN), Johnson Memorial Health Services (Dawson, MN), Madison Healthcare Services (Madison, MN), and Swift County Benson Hospital (Benson, MN) are working together to create a critical care facility for patients in and near Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, and Swift counties who have confirmation of COVID-19 virus.

The Tri-County COVID Medical Center (TCMC) will operate out of and utilize the space in the vacant Prairie Correctional Facility, which is owned by CoreCivic and located in Appleton, Minnesota, should there be a high volume of COVID-19 cases in the region. The facility is being provided to TCMC at no cost – meaning no financial benefit to CoreCivic. The facility will be staffed and managed by health care professionals, and CoreCivic will devote a small staff to maintain the building.

Commenting on the company's role, CoreCivic CEO Damon Hininger stated “This is an extraordinary time in the history of our country when the public and private sectors need to work together to find innovative ways to solve the most urgent problems we face. We see our role as supporting our government partners and the communities we serve in any way we can.”

Leadership from the area health care organizations felt the correctional facility was the best fit in the tri-county area to start this endeavor. It has robust medical and sanitation facilities, its design allows us to triage patients, and it is turnkey.

Teams from each health care organization have already begun planning and meeting at the proposed location. If all support and resources come together, the TCMC is projected to open March 30, 2020.



At present, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the tri-county region. Since the COVID-19 outbreak is a rapidly evolving situation, the five independent health care organizations will continue taking steps to help control the spread of this virus while caring for those who may become affected.

Information updates are currently being provided through Appleton Area Health's Public Information Officer. At present all information will be shared on the Appleton Area Health website at: www.appletonareahealth.com and on the Appleton Area Health Facebook page @appletonareahealth

News media inquiries may be directed to Angel Molden, Marketing Director/Public Information Officer.