

This update highlights two areas: 1) the Governor's Press Conference on Point of Care Testing; and 2) the extension of the Proclamation Declaring a State of Emergency and the Existence of a Catastrophic Health Emergency.

Press Conference - Antigen Testing

This morning, Governor Larry Hogan held a press conference at the offices of Becton, Dickinson, and Company (BD) in Sharps, Maryland. Earlier this summer, BD received emergency use authorization for its BD Veritor Plus System for Rapid Detection of SARS-COV-2 Assay. Governor Hogan began the press conference by stating that back in mid-July, the State of Maryland began discussing ongoing testing shortages with Dr. Rajiv Shah, President of the Rockefeller Foundation on how a public/private partnership could work together to scale up productions of rapid Point of Care (POC) testing. Governor Hogan then recruited nine other states (Rhode Island, Arkansas, Michigan, Ohio, Massachusetts, Virginia, Louisiana, Utah, and North Carolina) to create an interstate testing compact to purchase five million POC tests (500,000 for each state). After signing on, Maryland and the other states began discussions with two of the United States manufacturers of the POC systems - BD and Quidel Sofia.

Today, Governor Hogan announced that Maryland is the first state in the compact to move forward and place an initial order for 250,000 tests and systems from BD. Deputy Secretary Dennis Schrader pointed out later in the press conference that the tests are \$30/each and the order was for \$8 million (paid for by a CMS grant). It was not stated when these tests would be received or distributed. The plan is to deploy tests/devices to nursing homes, assisted living communities, prisons, colleges/dormitories and to communities to identify isolated clusters or outbreaks. Governor Hogan emphasized that these tests and machines do not take the place of the more sensitive PCR tests but provides Maryland with a valuable tool to continue to lead Maryland and the nation back to recovery.

Dr. Rajiv Shah, President of the Rockefeller Foundation also spoke. He stated that testing is the only way out and that shutdowns are not viable or affordable. Neither is it tolerable for the loss of life that has occurred in hospitals and nursing homes and in the minority populations. He also stated that with these tests individuals will get results in as few as 15 minutes and will do so with sufficient sensitivity to pinpoint those who are positive and remove them from the chain of transmission much more quickly and efficiently. To support this broad use of testing, Duke University, Arizona State, and the Rockefeller Foundation worked together to create a set of recommendations on how to appropriately use rapid screening tests. As we head into flu season, the goal is to have 70-200 million tests being performed each month.

During the Q&A, there was a question regarding the accuracy of the POC tests. The Governor stated that early in the process, the accuracy of these tests was lower, at 40-50%, than the tests purchased. It is with this increased accuracy that Maryland is now ready to deploy them more widespread. Dr. Shah also answered a question regarding use in schools. He said that in communities with higher community transmission it may make sense to test school age children using these tests, but it really depends on community situations.

[Press conference can be viewed here.](#)

[Recommendations from Duke University.](#)

Extension of Catastrophic Health Emergency

For the eighth time, Governor Hogan also issued a proclamation extending the State of Emergency and Existence of Catastrophic Health Emergency. Each [proclamation](#) is only good for 30 days and then must be renewed to extend it along with the Orders and Directives issued under the proclamation.