Plan to Take the Following Actions if COVID-19 is Spreading in your Community

1. Work with local and state public health organizations, healthcare coalitions, and other local partners to understand the impact and spread of the outbreak in your area.

2. Designate staff who will be responsible for caring for suspected or known COVID-19 patients. Ensure they are trained on the infection prevention and control recommendations for COVID-19 and proper use of personal protective equipment.

3. Monitor healthcare workers and ensure maintenance of essential healthcare facility staff and operations:
   - Ensure staff are aware of sick leave policies and are encouraged to stay home if they are ill with respiratory symptoms.
   - Be aware of recommended work restrictions and monitoring based on staff exposure to COVID-19 patients.
   - Advise employees to check for any signs of illness before reporting to work each day and notify their supervisor if they become ill.
   - Do not require a healthcare provider’s note for employees who are sick with respiratory symptoms before returning to work.
   - In settings of widespread transmission, your facility may consider screening staff for fever or respiratory symptoms before entering the facility.
   - Make contingency plans for increased absenteeism caused by employee illness or illness in employees’ family members that would require them to stay home. Planning for absenteeism could include extending hours, cross-training current employees, or hiring temporary employees.

   - Assess the patient’s ability to engage in home monitoring, the ability for safe isolation at home, and the risk of transmission in the patient’s home environment.
   - Caregivers and sick persons should have clear instructions regarding home care and when and how to access the healthcare system for face-to-face care or urgent/emergency conditions.
   - If possible, identify staff who can monitor those patients at home with daily “check-ins” using telephone calls, text, patient portals or other means.
Engage local public health, home health services, and community organizations to assist with support services (such as delivery of food, medication and other goods) for those treated at home.

Considerations for specific settings (In addition to above)

1. Outpatient facilities
   - Reschedule non-urgent outpatient visits as necessary.
   - Consider reaching out to patients who may be a higher risk of COVID-19-related complications (e.g., elderly, those with medical co-morbidities, and potentially other persons who are at higher risk for complications from respiratory diseases, such as pregnant women) to ensure adherence to current medications and therapeutic regimens, confirm they have sufficient medication refills, and provide instructions to notify their provider by phone if they become ill.
   - Consider accelerating the timing of high priority screening and intervention needs for the short-term, in anticipation of the possible need to manage an influx of COVID-19 patients in the weeks to come.
   - Symptomatic patients who need to be seen in a clinical setting should be asked to call before they leave home, so staff are ready to receive them using appropriate infection control practices and personal protective equipment.
   - Eliminate patient penalties for cancellations and missed appointments related to respiratory illness.

SOURCE: CDC.gov