



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Asante investigates confirmed cases of COVID-19 among employees**

MEDFORD, Oregon. (July 26, 2020) – Asante and Jackson County Public Health, with support from Oregon Health Authority, are investigating confirmed cases of COVID-19 among a small group of employees at Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center. The hospital's cases are expected to be reported by Oregon Health Authority in its weekly workplace outbreak summary on July 29.

In recent weeks, there were two separate instances unrelated to each other when several employees at Asante Rogue Regional tested positive for COVID-19. During these instances, there are no known cases of patients acquiring COVID-19 from an Asante employee.

In one instance, a nurse at Asante Rogue Regional experienced symptoms of COVID-19 after the last shift worked. The nurse did not have symptoms while at work and stayed home once the symptoms presented. Coworkers of the nurse have tested positive for COVID-19. This was a case of community-acquired illness and was not acquired from a patient.

In the second case a week later, there was an asymptomatic patient on one of the units at Asante Rogue Regional for four days. Per protocol, the patient was tested for COVID-19 prior to being transferred to a skilled nursing facility for post-discharge care; that test came back positive. Employees at Asante Rogue Regional who cared for the patient also tested positive. The patient was transferred to Asante Ashland Community Hospital.

Asante and Jackson County Public Health continue to partner closely to assist each other with contact tracing, as our two organizations have done since the pandemic first hit Southern Oregon.

Our commitment has always been to provide the safest patient care possible. As we continue to reinforce our current safety procedures, we are investigating these instances to learn how and why they happened, to identify any gaps in our protocols, and to strengthen or make changes to our protocols if gaps are determined.

We will continue to practice the best safety precautions available to prevent the spread of this and all other infectious diseases, including:

- Requiring face masks for employees, patients and visitors
- Screening for wellness upon entering the hospital
- Consistently cleaning and sanitizing often-touched surfaces
- Physical distancing at work and in public areas



We understand there may be apprehension about seeking medical care. We want to reassure our community that it is still safe to seek medical care at our hospitals and clinics, and that it's very important not to delay medical treatment.

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*Asante is a **local**, community-owned and governed not-for-profit organization with 6,000 employees who provide medical care to nearly 600,000 people in a nine-county area of Southern Oregon and Northern California. It includes Asante Ashland Community Hospital, Asante Physician Partners, Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center in Medford, Asante Three Rivers Medical Center in Grants Pass, and additional health care partnerships throughout the region.*

***Devotion to our community and our employees** is not new for Asante; it's at the core of our Mission, Vision and Values. Like you, Southern Oregon is our home. Our heart for service reaches beyond the care we provide. Standing side-by-side with our neighbors, we strive to help our communities grow and prosper through achieving good health. You are at the center of why we do what we do.*