As the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved we at Community Health Centers Inc. felt very strongly during this very challenging time to implement, pivot, and adjust within the organization to meet the needs of our patients and community. With a widespread lack of PPE (personal protective equipment) and test kits in health care facilities across the nation we partnered with Orange County to perform COVID-19 testing at two of our locations in communities identified as “hot spots” in the county. Our partnership allows us to assess new and established patients in areas with increasing community acquired infections.

CHC implemented and incorporated Telemedicine in the drive-up testing allowing providers to perform a clinical assessment of symptoms, risks for complication, and designing a plan of care for our patients including testing for COVID -19. This allows us to follow infection control measures while being convenient and safe for our patients and staff while taking the best care possible to new and established patients with symptoms or exposure to the virus. This method lets us separate regular patients and healthcare workers from possible COVID-19 cases.

CHC set up 3 visit stages that allows the patient to stay in their car while completing clinical assessment and COVID-19 test. Staff do a double identification on every patient between each stage. CHC staff confirms a minimum of two unique identifiers prior to the provision of any services, treatment, or procedures.

An initial team will register them, obtain insurance verification, and demographic information. Our second team takes a computer on wheels, where a provider is live with two-way, real time interactive communication between the patient, and the practitioner at the distant site. The provider will complete the assessment and evaluation of the patient while the patient stays in the car. This will also allow us to asses multiples family members at risk of infection with evaluation at the same time while minimizing the risk of virus transmission to others during a face to face visit. Once the provider has completed the assessment and treatment as well identified the risk, determined priority, and indication for testing the patient the patient then moves to the third stage- testing and education where trained nursing staff will obtain the sample, educate the patient on isolation or quarantine as well education on the medical diagnosis, treatment plan, warning signs and symptoms, possible complications and infection control measure.

Once we receive the test results the patients are notified and reported as required. Patients with a positive test result are notified by the Care Team nurse who follow up on symptoms, possible complication and educate the patient on infection control. Patients are scheduled for a follow up telemedicine visit with the provider. Patients with negative results are notified by the care team nurse.

Examples of Patient Identifiers:

Full Name

Date of Birth

Social Security number

Address

Telephone Number

If the patient tests positive the state is notified & a follow-up appointment is made for the patient. If the patient tests negative a nurse calls notify the patient.

Double Identification is checked between each stage.

Community Health Centers Inc continues working with the Orange County in controlling, testing and assessing patients for COVID-19 in our communities with increased community acquire COVID-19 infection. The Drive-up testing model would be our model to follow until this pandemic infection is controlled and can be replicated in the future if needed.