*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

**HEALTHCARE WORKER COVID-19 TESTING**

**QUINCY, CA, (April 3, 2020)** – On April 2, 2020, Plumas District Hospital (PDH) started testing employees for COVID-19.  This measure is in an abundance of caution.  The COVID-19 surveillance program will test approximately 40 employees over two days as a preventive measure to ensure the health and safety of our patients, staff and the community.  The hospital is currently testing healthcare personnel whose job duties require frequent patient contact.

"We are using this time, while we have adequate supply of personal protective equipment and testing supplies to evaluate our staff to ensure the safety of one another and our patients," said Chief Executive Officer JoDee Read.  "We are cooperating with the other hospitals in the County to perform similar testing."

If an employee tests positive, even with no symptoms, they will be asked to stay home and follow public health guidelines on when it's safe to return to work.

"Testing a large fraction of our employees and physicians involved in direct patient care, will significantly improve our ability to rule out asymptomatic carriers (people with no symptoms)," said Jeffrey Kepple MD. "This higher volume of testing gives improved statistical significance, and better prepares us for scaling up COVID-19 testing in general."

PDH is prepared for an eventual case.  The hospital is working closely with Plumas County Public Health Agency to monitor the spread of COVID-19 in California and Plumas County.  Staff have the appropriate training, supplies and equipment in place and are following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines closely.  Established plans and protocols are being followed at this time to limit potential exposure, including visitor restrictions since March 18.

The ongoing safety of our patients, staff and community is our primary focus.  Our response strategies will slow the spread of COVID-19 in Plumas County and ensure that our health care systems can assist those in need.