Merakey’s Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) – Updated March 4, 2020

Merakey is committed to the safety and well-being of individuals we support, employees and their families. Please check back often for the most updated information.

Has there been any diagnosed cases of novel coronavirus at Merakey?
No. To date, there are no known cases of novel coronavirus at any Merakey’s facilities or programs. The steps we are taking are purely preventative and being taken as a precaution.

What is Merakey doing to address the potential spread of the coronavirus?
• **A coordinated, companywide approach.** Merakey launched a project team which includes members from each division and medical personnel at Merakey and will help us have a unified and coordinated response to any changes in the risk associated with the coronavirus.
• **An approach guided by science.** Our approach will follow guidelines published by the federal government’s Center for Disease Control (CDC) and will be tailored to the needs of our staff and the people we serve. We will be issuing regular communications to keep you up to date on the steps we are taking.
• **Initial steps are underway.** Merakey is taking the following initial steps.
  o Purchasing additional supplies including hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes, surgical masks, and gloves that can be quickly deployed should the risk level change.
  o Developing procedures and protocols for the different types of services we provide such as community-based, residential, outpatient programs.
  o Beginning regular updates and education to our staff, individuals and families, and the communities we serve to keep them as up to date as possible.

What is novel coronavirus?
According to the CDC, coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others that circulate among animals. Human-to-human transmission of the 2019 novel coronavirus has been confirmed — believed to occur from the exchange of respiratory fluids.

What are the symptoms of novel coronavirus?
Common signs of coronavirus include mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. The suspected incubation period of the virus is believed to be from two to 14 days.

How does novel coronavirus spread?
Much remains unknown about how this new strain of coronavirus spreads, and current knowledge is based on what is known about other coronaviruses with person-to-person spread, such as SARS and MERS. Transmission is thought to occur via respiratory droplets
produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. For both SARS and MERS, spread has generally occurred between close contacts.

What steps should I take?

- **Take the same commonsense approach that you already do for viruses like the flu.** The federal government recommends that health care professionals use the same strategies and procedures associated with any virus, such as the flu, including following infection control procedures.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

- **Post and share information from the CDC.** Below are links to the CDC website providing a fact sheet about COVID-19 and the prevention of the spreading of germs.
  - CDC Fact Sheet on the Coronavirus (English)
  - CDC Fact Sheet on the Coronavirus (Spanish)
  - CDC Guidance on Stopping the Spread of Germs (English)
  - CDC Guidance on Stopping the Spread of Germs (Spanish)

- **Perform routine environmental cleaning.** Merakey is increasing the cleaning at our locations as a preventative measure. You may also want to routinely clean surfaces that you frequently touch, such as your workstation. CDC guidance is that usual cleaning agents are sufficient for cleaning and no additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.

What should I do if I feel sick?

According to the CDC, anyone who feels sick should:

- Seek medical advice — Call ahead before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others.
- Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.