



Office of
QUABBIN HEALTH DISTRICT
126 Main Street

Ware, Massachusetts 01082
Telephone: (413) 967-9615
Facsimile: (413) 967-9646

Serving the Communities of Belchertown, Ware, and Pelham, MA



Judy Metcalf, R.S., C.H.O.
Director of Public Health

WARF

How are COVID-19 illnesses being diagnosed and categorized?

There are two ways a person could be diagnosed with COVID-19.

1. Health Care Provider diagnosis without laboratory confirmation.

While testing is becoming more widely available, there is still a criteria on who will or will not be tested at the hospital or a very large medical practice. Therefore, some people may seek medical treatment for cold or flu symptoms and NOT be tested for COVID-19. If it is an actual visit, a rapid flu test may be performed. If in the health care professional's opinion you meet the criteria for COVID-19 symptoms, you will receive a **clinician diagnosis**. As with any contagious respiratory disease, and especially given the pandemic, the healthcare provider will advise their patient to stay home in *isolation*. And keep themselves as much as possible from their household members who should also follow *quarantine* guidance. Guidance is posted below. Please beware, most of these clinician diagnosis will be unknown to both the State and Local Health Department. Therefore, people who are mildly ill at home need to exercise **social responsibility**. And please if conditions get for you, **and you need an ambulance please tell 911 dispatch so that the first responders coming to help you can be properly outfitted with personal protective equipment**.

2. Laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Quabbin Health District will be notified electronically on a secured system of all persons who reside in Belchertown, Ware or Pelham who test positive. They will be contacted by telephone by either the Town's Public Health Director or Public Health Nurse. Additionally, residents who have had a test performed but pending results will also show up as suspect. If a resident of the District is identified as a close contact of a case in another community that information should also be linked to our electronic reports, but that is very much dependent on the community where the case lives. Laboratory confirmed cases will receive formal Orders to Isolate. Contacts of laboratory cases will receive formal Orders to Quarantine. **If you need an ambulance please tell 911 dispatch so that the first responders coming to help you can be properly outfitted with personal protective equipment**.