

Keep it up, Minnesota!

① Wash your hands

② Get tested when sick

③ Stay 6 feet from others

④ Wear a mask

⑤ Stay home when able

STAY SAFEMN

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Many people with COVID-19 have mild or few symptoms. If you have symptoms and would like to be tested, please call ahead: (218) 463-2500.

LifeCare Medical Center testing site hours:
Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm | (218) 463-2500

For medical emergencies, such as difficulty of breathing, call 911.
www.lifecaremc.org

24/7 Coronavirus Screening Hotline:
701.780.6358



A LETTER *from* LIFECARE

The global impact of COVID-19 has been absolutely staggering. Watching this disease spread from country to country quickly led us to realize that we here in northern Minnesota were not beyond its reach, and that past work in preparedness and precaution would be tested.

Rarely does a far-off event so significantly impact life in Roseau County. But this crisis certainly has. Beyond the health aspects, the economic lockdown arising from the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our community in different ways. People's work and livelihood have been affected. Essential workers, who are vital for the core functions of the economy and society, were required to stay on the job.

Not all essential workers face the same level of risk. Many, including some LifeCare staff, are "frontline" workers who must provide their labor in person while others in the workforce can perform their duties from home. Some businesses, meanwhile, have shut their doors or are operating on a very limited basis. Still others are doing work that is very different from their usual job. This includes making face shields and mask fasteners, teaching or caring for children, producing hand sanitizer, and making cloth masks. Lots of cloth masks!

Community members and nursing home residents are saddened by the lack of close personal communication, as are we. But safety is the number one priority and we are determined to see this through safely and successfully.

Whatever your role has been and continues to be during these unusual times, please know that LifeCare is here for you. We are confident in our medical preparedness, proud to be part of this great region, and appreciative of you and your support of LifeCare Medical Center.

Stay safe and healthy,
LifeCare Staff, Physicians, and Board of Directors



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SUMMER 2020

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SPECIAL EDITION

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LifeCare awarded Top 100 Critical Access Hospital status

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LifeCare Medical Center

Never miss a beat; follow us to get the full dose!

Local News Crew Films at LifeCare

LifeCare's EMS Polaris Ranger

Colonoscopy Awareness Month

A World Of Hearts

Horse Visits Greenbush Manor

Universal Masking

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COVID-19 DAILY UPDATE

COVID-19 Update

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6

TOTAL CASES ROSEAU COUNTY • MN

SUMMER 2020

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 2

healthmatters

25 years!

Your regional healthcare publication courtesy of LifeCare Medical Center

LifeCare hires Nathan Brovold as its first Chief Nursing Officer

One of the constants in healthcare is the fact that things are always changing.

At LifeCare, one of these changes occurred last year when the Board of Directors approved the creation of the medical center's new administrative role: Chief Nursing Officer (CNO).

Answering directly to the President/CEO, this position oversees a vast number of departments within the organization. Responsibilities including emergency; inpatient, outpatient, and surgical services; home care, hospice, and public health; behavioral health; and more.

In June 2019, LifeCare welcomed Nathan Brovold, MBA, BSN, RN, to fill this significant position within the organization.

Tasked with producing an updated outlook for future growth and success for the hospital, Brovold hit the ground running.

"Nathan is an excellent addition to our executive team," says LifeCare President/CEO Keith Okeson. "He is passionate about providing the highest quality of care to the people of this region and his skill set, being both clinical and business focused, has helped him bring change and growth to the areas he supervises."

Solid Background

As a tenured, Registered Nurse with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, Brovold chose to pursue a Master's in Business Administration.

"I already had a good clinical background and determined an MBA would expand my business and healthcare leadership knowledge," Brovold says. "As a result, moving into the healthcare executive world became my next challenge."

Brovold is thrilled with the honor of being LifeCare's first Chief Nursing Officer, viewing the opportunity as a way to fully understand the organization and assist in bringing forth change that continues to move healthcare forward.

"I was very enthusiastic about having the opportunity to work for an organization that has a passion for providing great quality care to its patients," he says.



Nathan Brovold is LifeCare's Chief Nursing Officer. He joined the staff in June 2019 and is the first person to fill LifeCare's newest administrative role.

Brovold, who was immediately impressed with LifeCare's staff, state-of-the-art equipment, and facilities, feels privileged to be part of an organization that has worked so hard to become a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital in the United States.

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Headed North

Brovold was born and raised in the southern Minnesota community of Granite Falls, where he lived with Amy, his wife of 21 years, and their four children prior to making the move.

He was working as CNO at his previous job when a colleague told Brovold of the similar position being created in Roseau.

"When I learned of LifeCare's great work environment, people, and longevity, I immediately became interested," he says.

Brovold does admit, however, these weren't the only motivating factor, as moving north also supported his family's outdoor interests such as

fishing, hunting, motorcycling, and trail riding.

Trial By Fire

Brovold was less than a year into his new role at LifeCare when word of a worldwide health crisis began to spread.

"Disaster planning is an important part of leading a healthcare organization," he says. "However, preparing for a worldwide pandemic puts a whole different spin on things."

As the state and nation took the lead, LifeCare administration joined efforts with LifeCare Public Health, and LifeCare's emergency preparedness team to establish a response and surge plan that would allow staff to treat current patients while preparing for a potential rush of COVID-19 patients.

To date, that influx has not materialized but, Brovold says, "This is an amazing organization with very dedicated and skilled staff. I am extremely confident that if or when needed, LifeCare Medical Center will be prepared to continue to care for the patients who are so clearly the reason for our mission."

What does it mean to Be Ready?

One of the core responsibilities for any healthcare facility is to have contingency plans ready should disaster strike.

As a result, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, LifeCare had protocols in place for responding to crisis scenarios including floods, tornadoes, and yes, a disease outbreak.

"When we discussed our preparations for a possible coronavirus outbreak, we already had a framework," says LifeCare President/CEO Keith Okeson. "You hope you never have to use it, but that plan is vital for staying ahead of the situation."

In March, LifeCare went into Incident Command Mode, reviewing emergency planning

policies, procedures, and COVID-19 data.

As part of its strategy, and in coordination with partners throughout the region, LifeCare prepared a COVID-19 Surge Plan containing three main objectives: Ensure the safety of patients, visitors, and staff; maintain adequate numbers of supplies, equipment, and staff; and increase hospital bed capacity from 25 to 50.

The Surge Plan includes topics such as extra beds, oxygen, ventilators, gowns, face shields, and other protective equipment.

Further, it addressed food service, laundry, housekeeping, and other surge needs such as staff training.

To meet the plan's third objective, the entire Roseau campus was evaluated to determine the best available spaces for doubling bed capacity.

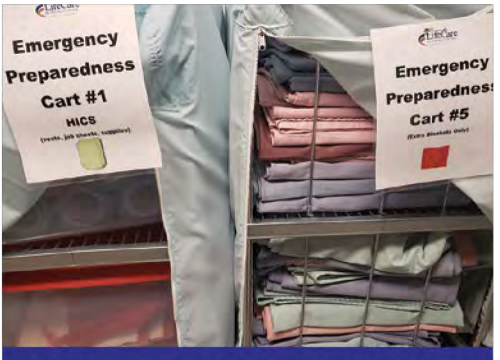
"Hospitals continually prepare for disaster surge capacity, but this often involves relying on coordination with other hospitals to increase capacity," says Nathan Brovold, Chief Nursing Officer at LifeCare.

The difference in a pandemic is that hospitals everywhere are asking for increased capacity at the same time.

"Our plan includes transferring our most critically ill patients to regional hospitals that specialize in treating intensive care patients," he says. "In exchange, we would most likely receive some of their patients so the larger facilities can focus on the sickest patients."



Purchasing agent Gary Markstrom (pictured) and fellow team members work closely with Department Director Allyson Eidsmoe to keep LifeCare's medical supplies well stocked.



LifeCare's emergency preparedness plan includes having extra supply carts ready in the event of a COVID-19 patient rush.

Easing Regulations

Hospitals in the U.S. are highly regulated, and while most of these regulations remain intact during this crisis, certain limitations have been removed to allow flexibility in bed capacity, telehealth coverage, and other changes.

"This allows facilities to better care for their community during the pandemic," Brovold says. "Given the worldwide crisis regarding a lack of supplies and equipment, I fully believe LifeCare has done an exceptional job meeting its surge plan objectives."

For more information, please call LifeCare Medical Center at (218) 463-2500.

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caring for generations
www.lifecaremedicalcenter.org

OUR MISSION: To provide care for a healthy life.

OUR VISION:

LifeCare is the region's healthcare center:

- Where physicians choose to practice.
- Where employees choose to provide care.
- Where communities choose to be served.

OUR VALUES:

- Compassion
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence

ON THE COVER: Members of LifeCare's acute care nursing staff smile with their eyes while protective masks cover their mouths and noses. Such coverings are now standard issue for all LifeCare staff as a safety barrier for patients and residents.



COVID-19 Stress Relief

The outbreak of COVID-19 has been stressful for many people. But, while fear and anxiety about disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children, the fact that you are worried doesn't mean you have a disorder.

Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and our community stronger.

Here are 8 tips to help you deal with stress and anxiety:

1. Take a break from news and social media. Constantly seeing and hearing the same information can cause overload and fear. Stay up to date on what is happening, but limit your media exposure. Avoid consuming 24/7 news reports since this tends to increase anxiety and worry. Remember that children are especially affected by what they see and hear on television.

2. Engage in self-care. Do things you enjoy that also are good for you. Read a book. Do a craft. Complete a puzzle. Play a game. Take a bath. Cross something off your to-do list. Listen to your favorite music. Spend time with nature. Practice meditation or deep breathing. Watch a funny movie or sitcom.

3. Exercise. Exercise can greatly increase your mood and help you refocus. If you can be outside, go for a walk or ride a bike to enjoy some fresh air and get the blood flowing. Maintaining a healthy diet and having an exercise routine helps your immune system along with your physical and mental health. Creating regular routines can be very helpful, especially if you have children and/or are working from home.

4. Reconnect. Call a friend and have a phone conversation about anything but the pandemic. Have a good laugh. Laughing can often help lift your spirits and put you in a better mood. Connect with friends and family via video chat.

5. Start a gratitude journal. Look for the good stuff happening in your life or in your community; the helpers, time with family, and opportunities to pull together. Write down three things you are grateful for each day.

6. Take care of your physical health. Stay current with physicals, immunizations, and chronic condition follow ups. Continue to take medication that is prescribed and make sure to connect with your provider with any new concerns that may come up.

7. Remind yourself of the facts. Keep in mind that the coronavirus pandemic is a crisis, but it doesn't mean you're doomed. It's important to be vigilant, but also to keep perspective. Rely only on accurate sources of news and information about coronavirus. For your health and safety, avoid the rumor mill and follow the recommendations from local, state, and federal governments and health agencies. Check the CDC and MN Dept of Health websites.

8. Talk to a professional. If you feel your mental health has significantly declined, call a professional for support. If you or loved ones experience symptoms of extreme stress (such as trouble sleeping, eating too much or too little, inability to carry out routine daily activities, or using drugs or alcohol to cope) speak to a health care provider or call one of the hotlines listed below.

If you are overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). Text MN to 741741 for the Crisis Text Line or call 1-800-282-5005.

These self-help tips are important any time. However, during this pandemic it is good to remind ourselves that practicing these tips will help our mental and physical well-being. Make yourself a priority!

LifeCare named a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital

Survey included over 1,300 U.S. hospitals

COVID-19 has put hospitals everywhere to the test. Besides caring for their patients, healthcare facilities must continually monitor their own performance and quality as a healthcare facility.

According to a 2020 nationwide assessment, LifeCare Medical Center is among the best hospitals in its class.

In a survey of over 1,300 hospitals, the Chartis Center for Rural Health named LifeCare Medical Center among the country's Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals, based on statistics gathered by iVantage Health Analytics' Hospital Strength INDEX®.

According to the center's website,

"Now, more than ever, it's important to have a healthy hospital."

— Keith Okeson, President/CEO
LifeCare Medical Center



these top performing hospitals excel in managing risk, achieve higher quality, secure better outcomes, increase patient satisfaction, and serve as a benchmark for other rural facilities.

President/CEO Keith Okeson first learned of the recognition in February but had little time to celebrate as LifeCare was beginning its pandemic preparedness.

"Now, more than ever, it's important to have a healthy hospital," Okeson says, "and while the pandemic has created challenges within every aspect of healthcare, our staff has made sure we

maintain a role of leadership within our community."

LifeCare Public Health

Leading the charge on outreach, surveillance, and education of communicable disease is LifeCare Public Health, which is uniquely a department within LifeCare Medical Center.

"Our job is to work with the Minnesota Department of Health and serve as the local contact point for guidance," says Director Julie Pahlen, PHN. "As a department of LifeCare, Public Health is able to work very effectively with Infection Prevention Nurse Jodi Beito, RN, and Director of Quality Kelly Hulst, RN on organizational wide COVID-19 efforts."

School administrators, business owners, and others continue to confer with LifeCare Public Health as they prepare workplace plans and safety protocols for their organizations.

"Many logistics come into play

when determining a safe workplace," says Pahlen. "Things like, screening for symptoms, tracking the flow of foot traffic, establishing proper entrances into a building are only part of our work. We encourage anyone with COVID-19 questions to contact us."

Laboratory Testing

LifeCare's laboratory, which coincidentally just received a glowing report from The Joint Commission, faced its own challenges in preparation for COVID-19 testing.

"We had to overcome major obstacles as things were unfolding," says LifeCare's Director of Laboratory

Nima Mostofi. "For example, we initially received over 200 testing swabs, but only a dozen transport containers. You need equal numbers of both."

As a result, specimen collection was very limited. That is, until he was able to locate another source.

"Within three weeks, we obtained the virus transport supplies needed to collect 50 and then over a 100 specimens," he says. "Now we are able to collect and send specimens to reference labs for over 1,000 patients."

The lab is also able to collect samples for antibody testing that shows if a patient has been infected or exposed.

Preparedness

According to Okeson, LifeCare has successfully prepared for this pandemic partly through the persistence and detective work of department directors like Nima and like Allyson Eidsmoe, who worked diligently to source medical supplies.



"As for LifeCare being a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, I credit all our department directors and staff for the high quality care that has always been central to our mission," Okeson says. "Over the past several months it has become profoundly clear that quality, which comes in many facets, plays a central role in keeping our local population educated and safe."

For more info about LifeCare Medical Center, a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, visit: www.lifecaremc.org



This special edition of HealthMatters is made possible through a collaborative effort between LifeCare Medical Center and Roseau County Emergency Management. For more on the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit the Minnesota Department of Health (www.health.state.mn.us) and the Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov)

Behavioral Health provides mental wellness check-ups

These past few months have been difficult, as we deal with the changes resulting from COVID-19. HealthMatters encourages you to make mental health a priority. Keep in mind that we are in this together and we will come out stronger.

Nothing brings about change faster than critical need, and in terms of the healthcare industry's response to COVID-19, critical needs were everywhere.

One of these was the search for ways to treat home-bound patients in need of Behavioral Health services at LifeCare.

"Prior to the pandemic, we were not able to offer Telehealth visits," says LifeCare's

Director of Behavioral Health Jan Carr-Herseth, LICSW.

As it was, the government and insurance providers like Medicare and Medicaid had many rules on how behavioral health sessions could be provided, she explains.

"Recognizing the psychological

and emotional strain that COVID-19 would have on people, they quickly lifted many of the restrictions, making it quite easy to provide services virtually," she says.

Once the restrictions were lifted, things happened fast.

"Within two weeks of the pandemic impacting Minnesota, we had converted our entire department to a Telehealth platform."

Behavioral Health has five therapists on staff who currently work from home or at their LifeCare offices. Appointments may be made by calling (218) 463-4732.

An initial call will schedule a

meeting with a therapist through Telehealth. Future appointments can be held through Telehealth or by phone.

Professional Help

Current events have caused many people to experience increased stress, anxiety, anger, depression, and frustration.

Most of these feelings are normal and can be managed by practicing self-care. However, in some cases an emotional experience impacts the ability to function normally.

"We need to look at how we're functioning in our lives," says Dr.

Anna Stein, a licensed psychologist at LifeCare. "That's kind of the sign to us when we need to seek any kind of extra assistance."

Examples of uncommon behavior might include being irritable with your family, getting angry more than usual, drinking or using other substances more and finding that this is resulting in negative consequences, failing to remember to pay bills, or not being able to get out of bed which has resulted in not going to work or not getting up to help your children.

"Everyone's threshold for stress is different, so don't compare yourself to anyone else," Dr. Stein says, "but be conscious of how your life is being impacted."

Referrals & Appointments

Many people are referred to a therapist through their health care provider, however referrals are not needed to schedule an appointment at LifeCare's Behavioral Health.

It is also encouraged that people take advantage of any Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) that their employers may provide.

LifeCare's new virtual appointments may be held at home or anywhere with access to a Wi-Fi signal. Sessions may be held through a computer, tablet, or smart phone. Patients without such access



may utilize LifeCare's Telehealth room in which physical distancing and required sanitization processes are practiced.

As always, anyone experiencing a mental health crisis should go immediately to LifeCare's Emergency Department (ED), where staff will assess the need for mental health services and, if appropriate, activate the Crisis Response Team.

Crisis Response is also available to anyone at any time of the day or night by calling (800) 282-5005.

To learn more about LifeCare's Behavioral Health Services, please call (218) 463-4732.

PRIMARY RESOURCES

24-Hour Crisis Line
(800) 282-5005 or Text MN to 741741
LifeCare Emergency Department
(218) 463-2500
LifeCare Behavioral Health
(218) 463-4732
Roseau County Social Service Center
(218) 463-2411
Roseau County Victim Services
(218) 463-4214
The Village Family Service Center
(800) 627-8220

MEDICAL PROVIDERS

Roseau Altru Clinic
(218) 463-1365
Warroad Altru Clinic
(218) 386-2020
Greenbush Altru Clinic
(218) 782-2400
Sanford Behavioral Health
(218) 683-4350
Altru Psychiatry – Grand Forks
(701) 780-6697

ONLINE RESOURCES

LifeCare Medical Center
www.lifecaremc.org
Minnesota Department of Health
www.health.state.mn.us
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
www.cdc.gov
National Alliance of Mental Illness
www.nami.org

Medical services available right here at LifeCare

LifeCare Medical Center believes in providing exceptional local medical care. Top notch medical professionals and support staff, excellent equipment, and new technology make LifeCare the provider of choice for our area. Thanks to an impressive number of services, most patients find no need to take long road trips for medical care. Here are just some of the services available right here on the LifeCare campus.

Emergency Medical Services

- Level IV trauma center
- 24-hour Emergency Department
- Advanced life support ambulance service
- Emergency helicopter and fixed wing air transport, provided by outside agencies

Convenience Care

After hours care for non-emergency patients:

- Monday – Friday 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday – Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Inpatient Care

- Birthing Center with Certified Lactation Counselors
- Inpatient Medical

Sub-acute Care

- Sub-acute Medical
- Respite

Surgery

- Hernia
- Gallbladder
- Appendix
- Breast Biopsy
- Hemorrhoidectomy
- Cataract
- Urological
- Gynecological
- Obstetric
- Foot and ankle surgery

Outpatient services

- Endoscopy procedures:
 - Gastroscopy
 - Colonoscopy
- Telemedicine with service by Altru
- Infusion therapy including:
 - IV antibiotics
 - Fluid replacement
 - Infusion chemotherapy

Cardiac Rehab

- Cardiac Rehab phase II
- Cardiac Rehab phase III
- Stress testing studies

Respiratory Care

- Sleep studies
- Pulmonary function testing
- Pulmonary rehab

Podiatry

- Foot and ankle surgery

Laboratory

LifeCare's laboratory provides detailed, real time results to aid providers in making accurate diagnoses. Lab is available for patients and providers in these areas:

- Blood transfusion
- Chemistry and Immunology
- Hematology
- Clinical microbiology and virology
- Urinalysis
- PT/INR and coagulation studies
- Rapid molecular testing
- Drug testing
- Pre-employment and DOT chain of custody collection

Rehabilitation

Services include:

- Sites in Roseau, Warroad, and Greenbush
- Physical Therapy for injury and post-operative rehab, wound care, pelvic floor dysfunction, and neurological conditions
- Occupational Therapy for fine motor coordination, stroke rehab, custom splinting, mobility equipment, and training
- Nutrition Counseling
- Athletic development programs
- 24/7 Community Wellness Centers – Reimbursement through insurance plans, programs and employers

Senior Services

- LifeCare Greenbush Manor
- LifeCare Roseau Manor
- Greenbush Assisted Living

Behavioral Health

Services include:

- Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment plans of psychological and emotional conditions
- Psychological testing
- Evaluations related to gastric bypass procedure
- Evaluations of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Providing assessments for disability
- Working closely with schools, social services, courts, law enforcement, and community agencies

Women's Health

A calming area within the Imaging Department with services that include:

- Pelvic, breast, and 3D obstetrical ultrasound
- Full field digital & 3D Tomosynthesis mammography
- Bone density screening
- Education on breast cancer awareness

Imaging

Includes imaging equipment that rivals or surpasses the region's best:

- 128-slice CT scanner
- MRI
- Nuclear medicine
- General & 3D ultrasound
- Vascular & Echo ultrasound
- Teleradiology
- Digital fluoroscopy
- Interventional pain management including RFA – Radio Frequency Ablation (lumbar, cervical, and knee)
- Aspiration and biopsy procedures

Public Health

LifeCare Public Health provides service to all of Roseau County. Including:

- Assuring an adequate local public health infrastructure
- Promoting healthy behaviors and healthy communities
- Preventing the spread of infectious disease
- Protecting against environmental health hazards
- Responding to disasters

Home Care and Hospice

LifeCare Home Care delivers in-home care to maximize an independent lifestyle through:

- Skilled Nursing
- Home Health Aides
- Social Worker
- Palliative Care
- Rehabilitation Services: Physical and Occupational Therapy

LifeCare Hospice provides end-of-life care to patients and families focusing on a healthcare team approach which includes volunteers and spiritual care.

To learn more about the services available at LifeCare Medical Center, call (218) 463-2500 and ask to speak to the department that interests you.

Shared Ventures

LifeCare Medical Center is proud to partner with Altru Health System to meet the health care needs of the community. The Roseau Area Diabetes Center and Altru's Renal Dialysis unit located on the LifeCare campus are two shared ventures that demonstrate the success of this teamwork approach.

A message from LifeCare & Roseau County Emergency Management

As the two leading entities responsible for coordinating local efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, LifeCare Public Health and Roseau County Emergency Management remind everyone free testing is available for people with symptoms.

"It is important to slow the spread and protect vulnerable populations such as the elderly, the very young, and those with underlying health conditions," says LifeCare public health nurse Joann Lambrides, PHN. "That's why testing is so vital."

To assist, LifeCare Public Health is working with the Minnesota Department of Health to perform case investigations on all positive COVID-19 individuals living in Roseau County.

"Please be cooperative if you receive a

call, as it provides important information, including how long to remain isolated and a discussion on ways we can help with any essential needs while you are in isolation."

Lambrides also warns people to be aware of scams. If in doubt about the legitimacy of a public health call received, contact LifeCare Medical Center to verify at (218) 463-2500.

"But above all, get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms and, while you wait for the results, be sure you practice these six safety recommendations."

They are: Separate yourself from others. Stay Home. Stay away from other people in your home. Wear a facemask. Avoid sharing personal household items. Wash your hands.