



Newport Hospital and Health Services

714 W. Pine Street, Newport, WA • (509) 447-2441
www.NewportHospitalAndHealth.org

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NHHS Receives Two Ventilators for COVID-19

NEWPORT – During a time when ventilators are in high demand, Newport Hospital and Health Services received two of the life-saving machines through valued community partners. One ventilator came from the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and the other came through Pend Oreille County Emergency Management from the federal stockpile. Until April 6th, it was unclear if NHHS would be able to keep the ventilators as Washington hospitals were asked to send them to New York.

NHHS Incident Commander Christina Wagar said “The State decided to leave these two ventilators in place because they are the only two in the entire County.” Wagar clarified that the ventilators were essentially on loan from the federal stockpile.

Although NHHS does not currently have any COVID-19 patients, they want to be prepared should need arise in Pend Oreille County. Ventilators are not typically used in critical access hospitals, except during surgical procedures. NHHS Surgical Services has two anesthesia machines for surgery and two transport ventilators, but the District did not want to allocate those just for COVID-19 patients. “We still have a population to serve, and emergency surgeries aren’t going to stop because of a pandemic,” said Wagar. “The two additional ventilators just add to our comfort level that we’ll be able to serve critical patients in Newport if necessary.”

Amidst the novel coronavirus pandemic, the ongoing support pouring out from the community has provided staff, NHHS leadership and providers with an overwhelming sense of appreciation. “The Pend Oreille River Valley has truly rallied in support of its healthcare providers,” said Tom Wilbur, CEO of NHHS. “We are extremely grateful for the Kalispel Tribe, Pend Oreille County Emergency Management, Northeast Tri County Health District, and many other agencies and individuals who have stepped up to help our front line caregivers and band with us in this very trying time. Thank you, all!”

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