Addendum to Outbreak Response Protocols: K-12, September 2020

In September of 2020, a group of Montana medical providers and state and local health officials issued *Outbreak Response Protocols: K-12* to assist schools in planning their response to COVID-19 exposure and/or cases in the school setting. This document serves as an update of the initial guidance, reflecting the developing body of science related to COVID-19 disease and the availability of associated resources. Below is a summary of changes.

1. **DEFINING A “SUSPECT CASE”** (page 4): The “any ONE symptom” category now includes “temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 F or chills.” The initial guidance excluded fever as a major symptom due to its frequency with other seasonal upper respiratory illness and potential for oversensitivity. As the winter respiratory illness season wanes, fever merits reclassification.

2. **PROTOCOLS** (pages 6-9): Since testing is much more readily available at this time, the decision to proceed with testing may occur earlier and at a lower threshold if there are clinical concerns.

3. **PROTOCOL – CONFIRMED CASE** (page 8): A positive antigen test, depending on the circumstances, may be sufficient testing. Consult with local public health for interpretation of antigen testing results.

4. **PROTOCOL – CONFIRMED CASE and CLOSE CONTACT OF A CONFIRMED CASE** (pages 8-9): New data has provided examples where a shortened quarantine duration may be appropriate. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) document *When to Quarantine* provides up-to-date information on quarantine duration. Consultation with local public health is recommended. Anyone 12 years or older in Montana is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination. We encourage everyone who is eligible to take full advantage of the benefits of a safe and effective vaccine. Data around quarantine requirements for those who are vaccinated is accumulating – please visit the CDC *Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People* for the up-to-date information on quarantine duration.

5. **RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER TRAVEL** (page 11): As the U.S. experiences increased reopening, it is important to stay updated on CDC *Travel Guidance* and protocols *After International Travel*.


8. **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**: Studies demonstrate that transmission rates in schools have been well-controlled with appropriate health and safety precautions, including consistent mask use, physical distancing, proper ventilation, and hand washing.

Links to references