

When you need to disclose a positive test result for the novel coronavirus

“GUIDE”

Get ready

Know what a positive test for coronavirus means for your patient considering their clinical status and comorbidities. Set up the conversation in such a way that you can devote the appropriate time and attention to the patient/family, whether this is being done by phone, video chat or in person. Include important people virtually if possible and desired by patient.

Understand what the patient has heard before you disclose

“What have the other doctors told you so far?”

“Have you heard any results regarding your coronavirus test?”

“I have the results, is it ok if we talk about them now?”

Inform the patient about the results using a one sentence “headline”

“The test came back showing that you do have the coronavirus”

Demonstrate empathy

“I know this can be scary to hear” (let the patient respond after each empathic statement you make and know you may need more than one)

“Is it ok if we talk about what we do?”

Equip your patient for the next steps in care

“The next steps are...”

“What questions do you have?”

“Just so I know I’ve been clear, tell me what you’ll tell your husband/wife”