Sara Alert™

Secure monitoring and reporting for public health

Communications Toolkit

Table of Contents

Welcome to Sara Alert^{TM} Communications Toolkit

Here you'll find messaging and multimedia tools to help you learn about, talk about and promote Sara Alert^{TM} to:

- Public health professionals
- Sara Alert^{TM} monitorees and members of the community

If you have questions about Sara Alert^{TM}, email us at: sarasupport@aimsplatform.com

Sara Alert™ Points of Contact

Your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager

★ Name:_____

Email:_____Phone:_____

The Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit sent to you by your Sara Alert™ Adoption Manager:

★ Name:_____

Email:_____Phone:_____
saraalert.org

See the **Key Resources** in each activity for more targeted support.

Section 1. Sara Alert™ Communications Checklist for New Jurisdictions

Use this checklist to plan for communication and outreach for your Sara Alert™ launch.

The activities and the timeline in the checklist are suggestions. You and your team can decide which to do based on your jurisdiction's resources and priorities.

The Checklist

Before launch

- ☐ **Meet with your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager.**
- ☐ **Review Sara Alert™ communication resources** (listed above).
- ☐ **Create a communications plan for your Sara Alert™ launch.**
  Key Resource: Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Sample Communications Plan
- ☐ **Share Sara Alert™ and Sara Alert™ resources with staff.**
  Key Resources:
  - saraalert.org/public-health/
  - Sara Alert™ User Forum
- ☐ **Share Sara Alert™ resources for monitorees with staff.**
  Key Resources:
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Tools for Monitorees
  - saraalert.org/sick-or-exposed/

At launch

- ☐ **Prepare talking points for leadership.**
  Key Resources:
  - Sara Alert™ Media Brief
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Key Messages, Talking Points
  - Sara Alert™ Public Health FAQ's
- ☐ **Send launch announcement email to jurisdiction staff.**
  Key Resource: Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Sample Email to Staff
- ☐ **Create a press release.**
  Key Resource: Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Sample Press Release
- ☐ **Work with your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager to prepare for media contact.**
  Key Resources:
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Key Messages, Talking Points
  - Sara Alert™ Media Brief
  - Sara Alert™ Online Media Kit
  - Sara Alert™ Public Health FAQ's
- ☐ **Schedule media interviews and inform your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager.**
  Key Resources:
  - Media and social media report: Request this from your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager.
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Key Messages, Talking Points
  - Sara Alert™ Online Media Kit
- ☐ **Implement social media and community engagement plans.**
  Key Resources:
  - Media and social media report: Request this from your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager.
  - Sara Alert™ Sick or Exposed webpage

After launch

- ☐ **Share monitoree communication tools with Sara Alert™ users/enrollers.**
  Key Resources:
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Sara Alert™ Tools for Monitorees
- ☐ **Continue media interviews.**
  Key Resources:
  - Sara Alert™ Communications Toolkit: Key Messages, Talking Points
  - Sara Alert™ Online Media Kit
  - Sara Alert™ Public Health FAQ's

Section 2. Sara Alert™ Tools for Public Health Professionals

Use these tools to inform your colleagues about Sara Alert™.
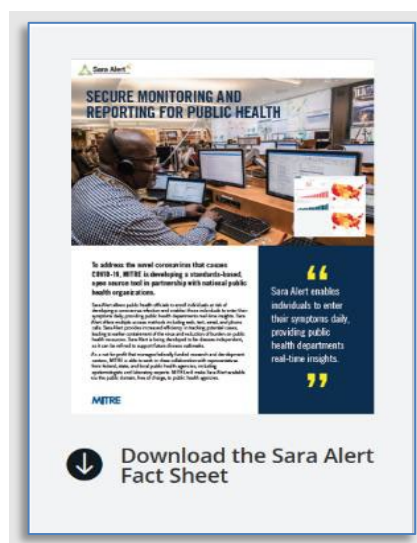
Sara Alert™ Basics for Public Health Professionals

Sara Alert™ Elevator Speech, Key Messages and Talking Points

Use this information when crafting promotion messages for professional audiences within and outside your organization:

- The **elevator speech** is a quick, 20-second introduction to Sara Alert™.
- **Key messages** are the core topics we want public health professionals at every level to know, remember and share.
- **Benefits** are highlights of the system that make Sara Alert™ uniquely fit to combat COVID-19 at national, state and local levels.
- **Talking points** are statements that support the key messages and tell the audience more about the key messages.

Additional details on the elevator speech, key messages and talking points can be found in Appendix A.

Sara Alert™ Resources and Tools available on the Sara Alert™ website
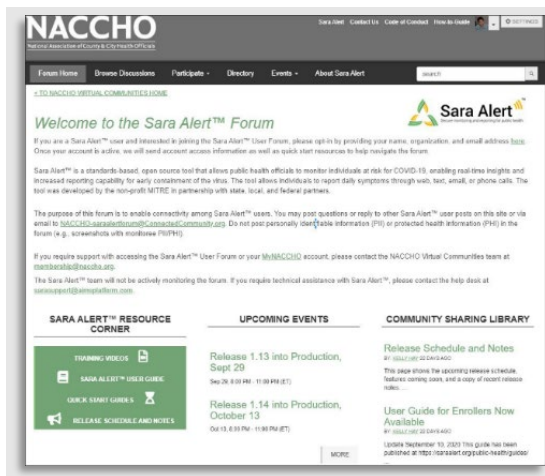

Sara Alert™ Public Health Fact Sheet

This two-sided fact sheet provides an overview of Sara Alert™ and how it works.

## Sara Alert™ Public Health Frequently Asked Questions

See answers to common questions from public health professionals about Sara Alert™. Topics include:

- Sara Alert™ Basics
- Security and Privacy
- Importing and Exporting Monitoree Information
- Application Programming Interface (API)
- Notifications
- Local Customization
- Transferring Records
- Monitoring More Than One Disease at a Time

Sara Alert™ User Forum

Join this online community for real-time support, engagement and conversation among public health professionals using Sara Alert™ in response to COVID-19.
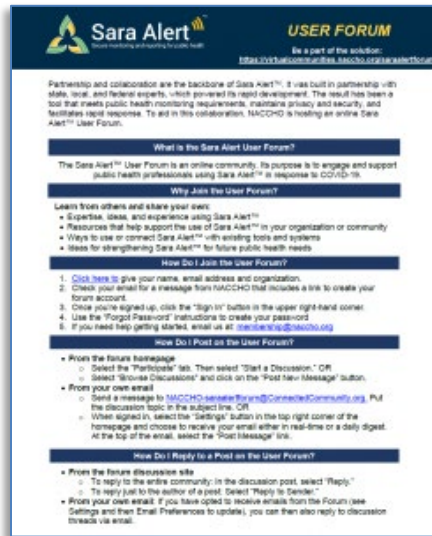
User Forum Fact Sheet

The Sara Alert™ User Forum is an online community. Its purpose is to engage and support public health professionals using Sara Alert™ in response to COVID-19.

Sara Alert™ Promotion Tools for Use with Public Health Professionals

Use these tools to promote Sara Alert™ in your organization.

Sara Alert™ Media & Events

Visit our Media & Events page to see a list of media highlights, professional conferences and meetings that feature Sara Alert™.

Sara Alert™ Widget

Promote Sara Alert™ with a widget on your webpage. The widget links to saraalert.org where users can get more information about the tool.

If you need a widget in a size that's not on the site, contact your Sara Alert™ Communications Manager.

Sample Announcement Email to Staff

This email provides a starting point and recommended language for communication about Sara Alert™ to professionals inside and outside your organization. You can adjust the content to meet your needs. See [Appendix B](#).
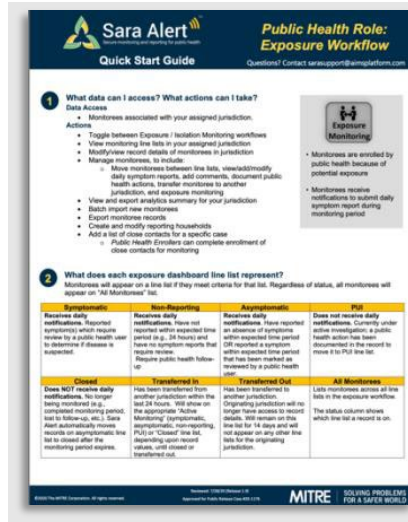
Sara Alert™ Technical Resources for Public Health Professionals

Use these tools to learn the technical side of Sara Alert™ though our User Guides and training videos.

Sara Alert™ Data Dictionary

This detailed table includes elements associated with data fields in the Sara Alert™ database.

Sara Alert™ Quick Start Guides

These one-pagers provide easy steps to get started with Sara Alert™ based on:

- Your role in setting up and using Sara Alert™
- The workflow scenario (exposure monitoring or isolation monitoring)
- Other topics, like household reporting and preferred reporting method

Sara Alert™ Tutorial Videos

Watch these videos to see step-by-step Sara Alert™ demonstrations. Topics include:

- Enroll New Monitoree. Runtime 4:45
- Monitoree Record Detail Overview. Runtime 6:10
- List Overview. Runtime 4:53
- Moving Monitorees Between Line Lists. Runtime 4:55
- Isolation Monitoring Overview. Runtime 3:39
- Moving Cases into Isolation Monitoring & Moving Cases Between Line Lists. Runtime 10:54

[Sara Alert™ User Guide](#)

This comprehensive guide explains roles and capabilities of the Sara Alert™ system. You should have received the guide by email in your launch packet. The User Guide is also available for download on the Sara Alert website and is updated every two weeks with each Sara Alert™ version release.
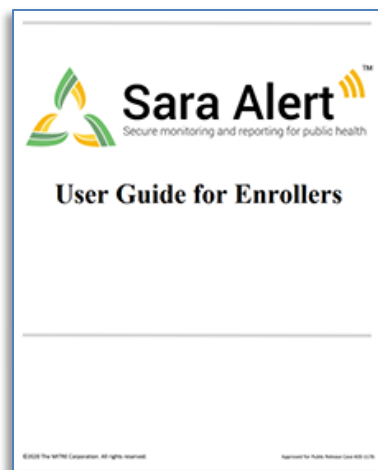
[Sara Alert™ User Guide for Enrollers](#)

This guide is for public health professionals who are enrolling monitorees into Sara Alert™. The User Guide for Enrollees is available for download on the Sara Alert website and is updated every two weeks with each Sara Alert™ version release.
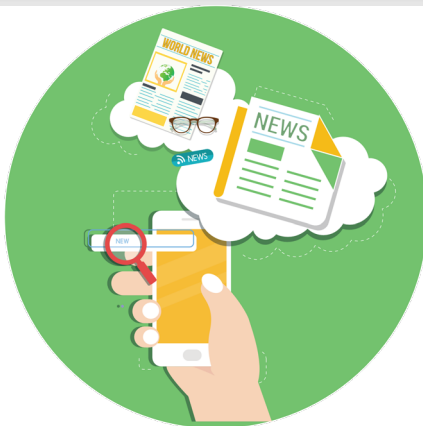
Section 2. Sara Alert™ Tools for Promotion and Media

Use these tools when informing the press and media about Sara Alert™.

Sara Alert™ Media & Events

Visit our Media & Events page to see media highlights and a list of professional conferences and meetings that feature Sara Alert™.

Sara Alert™ Online Media Kit

The online media kit contains resources to help you promote your use of Sara Alert ™. The media kit includes: graphics, Sara Alert™ logo, Powerpoint presentation on Sara Alert™, Sara Alert™ video conferencing backgrounds, and a branding guide

As part of our efforts to tackle #COVID-19 in our community, we will be using a new innovative tool @MITREcorp #SaraAlert to contain the spread of the virus and ensure our community's safety. For more information, visit www.saraalert.org

[@ORGANIZATION'S HANDLENAME] is working hard to keep our community safe! Check out @MITREcorp #SaraAlert, the innovative tool our team will use to monitor and report on #COVID-19 cases to help prevent the spread of the virus in our community. For more information, visit www.saraalert.org

Sample Press Release

A sample press release is provided in Appendix C that you can customize for your jurisdiction and use for your press release as upon launching your use of Sara Alert™.

Section 3. Sara Alert™ Tools for Monitorees

Use these tools to inform the general public about Sara Alert™.
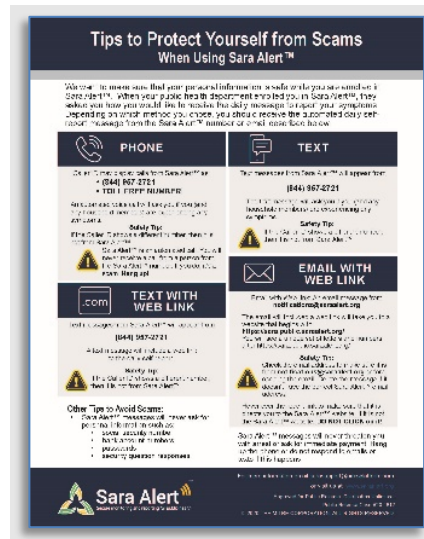
Sara Alert™ Fact Sheet: How to Protect Yourself from Scams

Help monitorees protect themselves from digital fraud during their reporting period. This one-sided fact sheet tells monitorees how to know for sure that their daily reminders are coming from Sara Alert™.
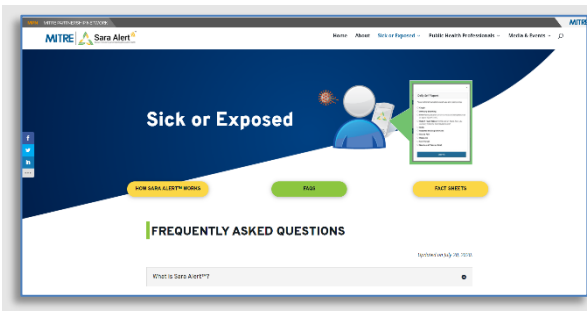
Sara Alert™ Monitoree Frequently Asked Questions

Encourage the general public to learn more about Sara Alert™. Topics include:
- What is Sara Alert™?
- Why are daily reports important?
- How does Sara Alert™ help the community?
- What happens if a monitoree reports symptoms?
- What information does a monitoree have to provide to sign up?
- Is monitoree information kept private?
- How long is a person monitored?
- Why is it called Sara Alert™?
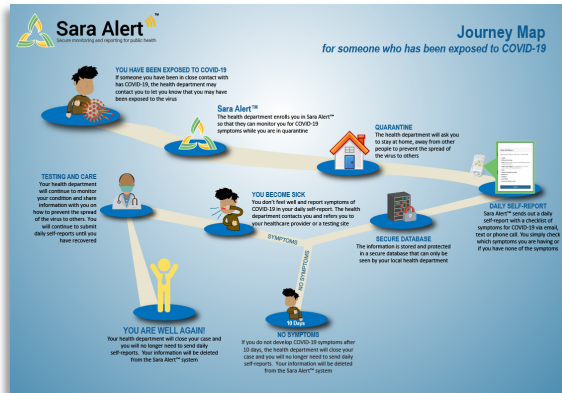
Journey Maps

These easy-to-follow maps help monitorees understand their journey once they are enrolled in Sara Alert™ and are monitored for symptoms of COVID-19. There is a journey map for those who are sick with COVID-19 and one for those who have been exposed to the virus.

[Sara Alert™ Video for All Audiences](#)

This short video offers a brief background of Sara Alert™ and shows how public health departments are using it to help control the spread of COVID-19. Length: 2:54 minutes.

Final Note

We are excited that your team has chosen to use Sara Alert™ to help your jurisdiction with monitoring and reporting during this pandemic. Please do not hesitate to contact your Sara Alert™ communications point of contact for assistance with your communication efforts.

We're here for you!
MITRE can help you with:

- Targeted messaging
- Stakeholder engagement
- Print and digital training and promotion assets
- Public and media relations
- Social media analytics

Contact us at:
saraalert.org/contact/

Appendix A. Sara Alert™ Elevator Speech, Key Messages and Talking Points

Sara Alert™ Elevator Speech

Sara Alert™ is a digital tool that helps public health professionals monitor and report on disease outbreaks like COVID-19. It's free to any public health agency and adaptable to any public health monitoring system.

Sara Alert™ Key Messages

- Sara Alert™ is a new, digital tool that helps public health professionals monitor disease outbreaks, like COVID-19. Its purpose is to:

- Slow the spread of harmful disease

- Get medical care quickly to those who need it

- Sara Alert™ provides real-time insight into disease spread. Sara Alert™ fast tracks the contract tracing process so public health can quickly assess disease spread and healthcare needs. When a person is identified as having contact with someone with COVID-19, public health providers enroll them in Sara Alert™ to report daily symptoms. This immediate response provides a useful snapshot of local disease spread. It also helps relieve public health workload related to follow-up contact tracing and communication.

- Sara Alert™ is a force multiplier for public health efficiency and effectiveness. It automates reporting and monitoring of people exposed to or infected with an infectious disease. It increases response scope and decreases response time, leading to:

- Earlier disease containment

- Reduced burden on public health resources

- Sara Alert™ is disease-independent. Its use and service are not limited to COVID-19. Because it's based in solid public health practice and privacy standards, public health professionals anywhere at any time can adapt it for the next potential outbreak.

- Sara Alert™ is free for public health use and easily integrated with other tools. Its open-source platform is in the public domain for public health in any jurisdiction.

- Benefits of Sara Alert™ to Public Health

    - **Public Health Workload Reduction.** Sara Alert™ increases efficiency and reduces workload in public health response.

    - Early and rapid symptom monitoring contains disease spread and helps prioritize medical care to those who need it most.

    - Sara Alert^{TM} reduces the need for manual public health follow-up and prioritizes people, who are registered in Sara Alert™, by disease risk and medical need.

- System dashboards and reports enable federal, state, territorial, tribal, local governments, and regional health organizations access to real-time information
- **Public Health Collaboration.** MITRE partnered with national, state and local public health experts to create Sara Alert™ for use in any community. Sara Alert™ was created **by** public health **for** public health. Based on public health standards:
- Sara Alert™ meets public health monitoring requirements, enables rapid response and maintains privacy of those who are registered in Sara Alert™.
- Sara Alert™ encompasses lessons learned and perspectives from those who are registered in Sara Alert™ and public health users during system development.
- **Adaptability and Disease Independence.** Sara Alert™ is an enduring resource for health monitoring beyond COVID-19.
- **Privacy.** Sara Alert™ complies with privacy and data use laws and policies.
- Sara Alert™ collects minimal information from those who are registered in Sara Alert™.
- Sara Alert™ automatically deletes information when the monitoring period is complete.
- **Data Security.** Sara Alert™ is hosted on the APHL Informatics Messaging Services (AIMS) platform by the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL).
- The AIMS platform provides cutting-edge data management and messaging services to public health and its partners.
- The AIMS cloud-based environment provides secure, shared services in transporting, validating, translating and routing digital data.
- AIMS technology serves various public health initiatives. Users include public health professionals, federal agencies, healthcare providers, hospitals and first responders.
- The AIMS platform adheres to security standards of and is accredited by the Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission (EHNAC).

Sara Alert™ Talking Points

What is Sara Alert™?

- Sara Alert™ is a digital tool that helps public health professionals monitor disease outbreaks. It automates reporting and monitoring of people exposed to or infected with an infectious disease like COVID-19.

- MITRE partnered with public health experts on Sara Alert™ to help public health:

1. Slow the spread of harmful disease

2. Get medical care quickly to those who need it

- Sara Alert™ is free for use by public health professionals. As an open-source tool, it's easy to adapt it to work with existing systems.

- Sara Alert™ is live on the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) Informatics Messaging Services (AIMS) platform. This is a trusted and cutting-edge cloud-based data-management platform.

- Partner and testing organizations include:
  - Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)
  - National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
  - Various state and local health departments

What does Sara Alert™ do?

- Sara Alert™ allows public health professionals to monitor two groups of people:

- Those exposed to an infectious disease like COVID-19

- Those who have symptoms of a disease like COVID-19

- A public health professional contacts and enrolls people exposed to or infected with COVID-19. Once contacted, people report their symptoms daily to Sara Alert™ via web, text, email or voice call. They give symptom reports for themselves and for members of their household.

- Sara Alert™ supports increased efficiency in tracking cases. This leads to earlier containment and reduced burden on public health resources.

Why is Sara Alert™ important?

- In a public health emergency like COVID-19 or another infectious disease outbreak, public health agencies must respond quickly. The first lines of defense are containment (stopping the spread) and mitigation (reducing harmful effects of infection).

- Sara Alert™ enables effective monitoring and rapid response to infectious disease threats. Before Sara Alert™, there were no tools to automate these efforts.

- Many health departments need help to modernize existing systems to respond to a pandemic like COVID-19. Because Sara Alert™ is free and open-source, public health can easily adapt and integrate it into current processes.

What are key times to use Sara Alert™ with COVID-19?

1. At the onset of a local outbreak in areas not yet hit hard

2. At the "rebound" of the virus when social distancing is relaxed

3. During outbreaks and future waves of infection

4. Beyond COVID-19, at the onset of any infectious disease outbreak, before it spread or becomes a pandemic

What does Sara Alert™ cost?

Sara Alert™ is available in the public domain, free of charge, to public health agencies. The MITRE Corporation created Sara Alert™ for use by any public health agency at no cost. Because MITRE is a not-for-profit organization that runs federally funded research and development centers, Sara Alert™ is in the public domain and free of charge.

As an [open-source tool,](link) Sara Alert™ is available on GitHub per the Apache 2.0 license for public and private use and is easily integrated into other tools. Open-source code users are encouraged to contribute updates and bug fixes to the GitHub repository. Who paid for development of Sara Alert™?

MITRE funded initial development of the tool. Other Sara Alert™ funders are the CDC Foundation and MITRE Engenuity, a foundation partner of MITRE.

How does Sara Alert™ ensure privacy?

Privacy is a hallmark of Sara Alert™. To ensure compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):

- Sara Alert™ encrypts data when it's sent to those who are registered in Sara Alert™ and when it's within the system database. This means the data of those who are registered in Sara Alert™. are converted to code so that the data are not readable.

- Sara Alert™ stores the information of those who are registered in Sara Alert™ in a protected database that meets federal security requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP).

Other privacy safeguards include:

- Sara Alert™ collects only basic contact, demographic and symptom-related information from those who are registered in Sara Alert™.

- Sara Alert™ automatically deletes data of those who are registered in Sara Alert™ after the reporting period is complete.

- Only public health professionals have access to the Sara Alert™ system and access is restricted by job function. A public health professional only has access to records that belong to their assigned jurisdication. This is a best practice of database use.

Where is the data of those who are registered in Sara Alert™ stored and how long is it kept?

- Sara Alert™ is live on the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) Informatics Messaging Services (AIMS) platform. This is a trusted and cutting-edge cloud-based data-management platform.

- Sara Alert™ automatically deletes information those who are registered in Sara Alert™ after the monitoring period is complete. However, public health agencies can export and save records in their local systems before they're deleted from Sara Alert™.

How is Sara Alert™ different than other reporting and monitoring tools?

- It's free, open-source and in the public domain.

- It's disease-independent—it's not just for COVID-19. Public health agencies can use Sara Alert™ to combat any infectious disease.

- Because it was created in collaboration with public health officials, Sara Alert™ helps public health agencies meet requirements for disease containment and quarantine and facilitates medical care, if needed.

Does Sara Alert™ have a location-tracking feature?

No. There is no location-tracking feature in Sara Alert™. We decided not to include this feature early and intentionally to protect individual privacy. Use of Sara Alert does not require the installation of an app on your phone or software on your computer.

Appendix B. Sample Email to Staff

Dear [Staff member's name],

We are pleased to announce that on [INSERT DATE], [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME} will begin using Sara Alert™ to help us combat COVID-19 in our community.

What is Sara Alert™?

It's a new, innovative, digital tool that helps public health professionals monitor infectious disease outbreaks. We will us Sara Alert™ to help us slow the spread of COVID-19.

Will you be trained to use Sara Alert™?

Yes. You have several training choices:

- Participate in Sara Alert™ training starting [INSERT DATE, TIME, PLACE INFORMATION]
- Watch tutorial videos
- Use the Sara Alert™ User Guide attached to this email. [ATTACH GUIDE TO EMAIL]
- Use the Sara Alert™ Quick Start Guides

How does Sara Alert™ benefit [ORGANIZATION NAME]?

Sara Alert™ enables us to:

- Make disease monitoring more efficient and effective so we can apply time and resources to follow-up and coordinate care
- Use a free, disease-independent tool that's ready in real time for diseases beyond COVID-19
- Adapt and tailor the tool for our use at any time. The tool is open-source and based on public health and personal privacy standards
- Benefit from public health input at every level, from national to local jurisdictions. Sara Alert™ is a true public health collaboration.

Questions?

- To learn more about Sara Alert™ and how it works, visit saraalert.org.
- To learn more about Sara Alert™ at [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME], email: [INSERT CONTACT EMAIL]

Appendix C. Sample Press Release

[State] Deploys New Technology to Limit the Spread of COVID-19

City, State –[Governor, Mayor, etc.] announced today that the [Jurisdiction] Department of Health is significantly expanding contact tracing by deploying a new tool called Sara Alert™ to support monitoring and reporting of COVID-19.

"By deploying the new Sara Alert™ system to assist us, we can improve our efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus, protect the health of [jurisdiction] people, and support our goal of safely opening up our community," said [Public Health Official]

The Sara Alert™ system, which is also used by several other jurisdictions, allows individuals who have been exposed to or infected with COVID-19 to report daily symptoms through web, text, email, or calls. The tool provides real-time insights and increased reporting capability to support containment of a disease of interest, currently COVID-19.

Sara Alert™ is free for use by federal, state, territorial, tribal, local governments, and regional health organizations. It was developed by MITRE, a not-for-profit organization that works in the public interest, in close collaboration and partnership with national public health organizations, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of County and City Health Officials, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, and other local and state health departments. Sara Alert™ enables public health workers to monitor and respond to the coronavirus pandemic and to coordinate and direct care where it is needed most.

"We developed Sara Alert™ with public health for public health," **said Dr. Paul Jarris, Chief Medical Advisor of MITRE's Health Transformation Technical Center, and former Vermont Commissioner of Health**. "Sara Alert™ has the potential to modernize the public health management of individuals in quarantine and isolation to protect communities from further spread of disease in this and future pandemics. As the pandemic evolves and stay-at-home measures are relaxed, states and localities can use it to strengthen efforts to control outbreaks in less affected areas, and to mitigate future waves of illness and possible rebound effects."

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