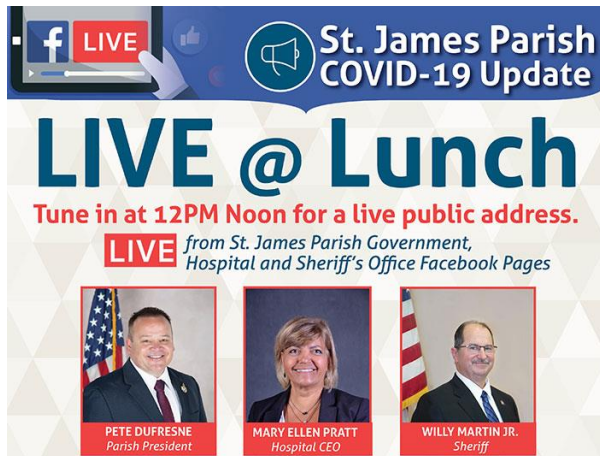


Managing COVID-19 in a Rural Community



**St. James Parish
COVID-19 Update**

LIVE @ Lunch

Tune in at 12PM Noon for a live public address.

LIVE from St. James Parish Government,
Hospital and Sheriff's Office Facebook Pages

PETE DUFRESNE
Parish President

MARY ELLEN PRATT
Hospital CEO

WILLY MARTIN JR.
Sheriff

In rural Litcher, Louisiana, [St. James Parish Hospital](#) anticipated the dangers of the pandemic and began preparing for COVID-19 and its spread throughout the community. Early on, the hospital connected with community partners to share information. Building on existing relationships with local nursing homes and the sheriff's department, the hospital hosted meetings to dive deeper into what enhanced infection control could look like at the facilities. While these community groups had worked together to provide care and complete lab work for their respective populations, the conversations during COVID-19 reflected a new way of working together that strengthened the working relationships and offered new

opportunities.

Conversations with community partners continued as the pandemic began to escalate in Louisiana and across the country. Mary Ellen Pratt, St. James Parish Hospital CEO, joined local government leaders in regular press conferences that were posted to the hospital's Facebook page. Some of these events were recorded live so community residents could ask questions in real time. In addition, the local newspaper offered to transcribe the press conferences so that older adults without access to Facebook and other technology would receive the information.

What started as a plan to share expertise and slow the virus's spread in the community led to ongoing, well-received Facebook Live press conferences and conversations with leaders from local government, the hospital and other community organizations.

A Q&A with [Mary Ellen Pratt](#) and another rural health care CEO provides further details about managing COVID-19 in a rural community.

May 28, 2020