

Local company fills need for immune support

Brown planning phased 'reopening'

By **Jim Cornelius**
Editor in Chief

While much of Sisters has shut down to slow the spread of the coronavirus, Personalized Nutrients ramped up its operations in its manufacturing facility on North Pine Street.

While customer service and sales staff are working from home, the manufacturing plant is humming — producing custom formulations of high-quality nutraceuticals.

Zoe Noe, the company's operations manager, told *The Nugget*, "We've added staff, we've hired temps, we had mandatory overtime for two weeks just to keep up."

Personalized Nutrients produces customized formulas for supplements that doctors provide to their patients or offer in their clinics. The formulas are research-based and of tested quality. Demand has been high for formulas that support the immune system.

"We certainly have seen an uptick in immune supplements during this time," Noe said.

She noted that many doctors have pivoted to telemedicine during the COVID-19 shutdown, and the company's model for ordering, producing and delivering its products is well-suited to that model.

By creating customized formulas with Personalized Nutrients, doctors are able to tailor supplement support specifically to each patient's needs and profile. It's a very different proposition to simply buying a jar of vitamins off the shelf at the store.

In addition to creating patient-specific formulas, Personalized Nutrients is able to offer an assurance of quality.

"This is completely made-to-order supplements, and all of our components have to pass our rigorous quality standards," Noe said. "We have a really, really strong quality system."

The company's website notes that, "The highest level of quality and efficacy is our core competency as evidenced by our GMP compliant manufacturing facility and our willingness to be completely transparent about the raw materials you can choose from."

The company has proved a beacon of good news for people who have lost jobs due to the shutdown. Noe has referred some of their temps to neighboring Laird

Superfoods, where they have been able to land jobs.

She noted one couple that had both been laid off and ended up a month later with jobs in Sisters.

Personalized Nutrients has also made a point of supporting local restaurants during the shutdown. They ordered dinners for their crew during the mandatory overtime period, and have continued to bring in lunches and coffee and snacks.

Noe said that everyone at the company is glad to have work during a growing economic crisis — and to have the opportunity to help the community and customers who seek to boost and protect their health in the face of a serious threat.

"We're extremely grateful," Noe said. "Nobody is taking anything for granted right now."

For more information, visit www.personalized-nutrients.com.

Oregonians may have a clearer picture of a roadmap to recovery during the first week of May.

A presentation by Governor Kate Brown dated April 20 lays out a tentative three-phase plan for lifting "Stay At Home, Save Lives" restrictions, a plan that is expected to be more fully lined out during the week of May 4. The presentation keys off of Trump administration guidelines that say that "reopening" requires downward trajectories during a 14-day period of influenza-like illnesses, COVID-19-like cases, of documented cases or of positive tests as a percent of total tests. They also call for "surge capacity" in health-care systems and "robust testing and contact tracing."

Brown's presentation indicates that metrics would be modified to reflect conditions in rural counties that have few or no confirmed cases. Counties would be able to request opening with positive recommendations from county health authorities and local hospitals and

a vote of the governing body certifying hospital capacity and sufficient personal protective equipment for first responders.

Phase 1 begins at the Governor's direction after all case status and health system preparedness criteria are met.

As it stands now, Brown's plan would likely keep sports arenas, churches, bars and gyms closed through phase one. A work group is to prepare a plan for allowing sit-down dining. People out in public, including parks and outdoor recreation areas, would be encouraged to maximize physical distance from others. Workers would be encouraged to continue teleworking wherever possible.

If health criteria hold for 14 days after initiating Phase 1, the state could then move on to Phase 2, where gathering sizes could go to 50 and non-essential travel could resume. Gyms and bars could reopen in Phase 2, with physical distancing requirements. Phase 3 would allow an unspecified increase in permitted size of gatherings,

unrestricted staffing at worksites; visitors could be allowed at nursing homes and bars and restaurants could have more seating.

Each phase is dependent upon the continued downward trend of cases.

A tentative timeline extrapolated from the presentation appears to have Oregon moving toward the initiation of a Phase 1 reopening somewhere around the third week in May, with subsequent phases initiated no earlier than 14 days after successfully moving through the previous phase. That would place Phase 3 possibly initiating somewhere around mid-to-late June.

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