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To: Recipients of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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**Important Information for Recipients of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)**

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE WIDELY

The Department of Health Services (DHS) expects that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) will not fully meet the needs of the provider community operating at surge capacity. Because DHS expects continued PPE shortages, facilities should follow strategies to optimize the supply of PPE in accordance with new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) available at the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>

Optimizing Your PPE

To optimize PPE, facilities should ensure that they have also implemented all possible engineering and administrative controls to reduce infectious disease transmission. Engineering controls may include isolation in airborne infection isolation rooms, use of physical barriers, properly maintaining ventilation systems, and other measures. Administrative controls may include limiting the number of patients going to hospital or outpatient settings, excluding all healthcare personnel from patient care areas who are not directly involved in patient care, limiting face-to-face encounters of healthcare personnel with patients, restricting visitors, source control, cohorting patients and healthcare personnel, maximizing use of telemedicine, and other measures.

Per the CDC guidance, facilities should understand their current PPE inventory, supply chain, utilization rate, and community PPE supply to know whether they are operating under conventional capacity, contingency capacity, or crisis capacity.

Conventional Capacity Measures

Under conventional capacity, facilities use measures for providing patient care without any change in daily contemporary practices. These measures, consisting of engineering, administrative, and PPE controls, should already be implemented in general infection prevention and control plans in healthcare settings.

Contingency Capacity Measures

Under contingency capacity, facilities use measures that may change daily contemporary practices but may not have any significant impact on the care delivered to the patient or the safety of the healthcare personnel. These measures may be used temporarily during periods of expected PPE shortages. Depending on the type of PPE, measures may include:

- Use of PPE beyond the manufacturer-designated shelf life for training and fit testing.
- Extended use of PPE, which refers to the practice of using the same PPE for repeated close contact encounters with several different patients, without removing the PPE between patient encounters.
- Limited re-use of PPE, which refers to the practice of using the same PPE by one healthcare personnel for multiple encounters with different patients but removing it (i.e., doffing) after each encounter.
- Other measures.

Crisis Capacity Measures

Under crisis capacity, facilities use alternate strategies that are not commensurate with contemporary U.S. standards of care. These measures, or a combination of these measures, may need to be considered during periods of expected or known PPE shortages. Depending on the type of PPE, measures may include:

- Extended use or limited re-use of PPE.
- Prioritization of PPE.
- Use of PPE beyond the manufacturer-designated shelf life for healthcare delivery.
- Use of PPE approved under standards used in other countries that are similar to U.S. standards.
- Use of alternatives to PPE, such as supplies that have not been evaluated as effective.
- Other measures.

During severe resource limitations, consider excluding health care providers (HCP) who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, such as those of older age, those with chronic medical conditions, or those who may be pregnant, from caring for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection.

Resources

Please review the full guidance from the CDC on strategies to optimize the supply of PPE for details on appropriate optimization measures by specific type of PPE. The CDC guidance is available on their website at the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>.

CDC has also published a checklist specifically for optimizing the supply of N95 respirators, available on the CDC website at the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/checklist-n95-strategy-h.pdf>