



March 15, 2020

Dear Healthcare Partners,

State officials, Governor Mike DeWine's COVID-19 Health Advisory Group, and the Ohio Hospital Association have been working on strategies for preserving personal protective equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The result of these efforts is the development of a statewide plan to both preserve PPE and to direct patients to the most appropriate setting for any necessary assessments and testing, away from the ED and other patients. We are asking clinical providers, particularly primary care and other outpatient providers, to adopt the attached "COVID-19 Guidance for Primary Care and Outpatient Providers."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recommends "Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators: Contingency Capacity Strategies" available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/contingency-capacity-strategies.html>; <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/conventional-capacity-strategies.html>.

The Food and Drug Administration recommends "Surgical Mask and Gown Conservation Strategies" available at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/surgical-mask-and-gown-conservation-strategies-letter-healthcare-providers>.

On a related note, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on Saturday released "Temporary Enforcement Guidance - Healthcare Respiratory Protection Annual Fit-Testing for N95 Filtering Facepieces During the COVID-19 Outbreak" available at <https://www.osha.gov/memos/2020-03-14/temporary-enforcement-guidance-healthcare-respiratory-protection-annual-fit>. While a fit test is required for anyone wearing a respirator to protect against COVID-19, annual fit test can be temporarily suspended if employee has already been fit tested to that respirator.

If you have PPE resource needs, please let your County Emergency Management Agency know. A County Emergency Management Agency Directory is available at https://webeoctraining.dps.ohio.gov/ohiocountyEMADirectorList/countyemalist_web.aspx.

Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Russ Kennedy
Deputy Director/Director of External Affairs
Ohio Department of Health
Email: Russ.Kennedy@odh.ohio.gov
Office: (614) 995-7973