

Banner Health implements PPE policy changes regarding N95 use

Moves taken to save as many lives as possible; ensure safety of health care workers



PHOENIX (April 2, 2020) – Throughout the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak, Banner Health’s top two priorities have remained the same: 1) We are committed to saving as many lives as possible, and 2) we want to do this while ensuring the safety of our health care workers.

We are doing everything we can to protect our team members while they care for our communities. Personal protection equipment (PPE) for our health care workers continues to be at the top of our list to ensure their safety while providing care to our patients. While we continue to maximize our usual supply chain, we are also working on innovative ways to secure additional resources.

We’ve partnered with several suppliers to ramp up the production of PPE, including 3D printing of plastic face shields. We partnered with local distillery OHSO to produce hundreds of gallons of hand sanitizer. We’ve manufactured thousands of microbial resistant procedural masks and are also actively working to refurbish FEMA supplies that we have received.

Protecting our workforce through an extended battle with COVID-19 means that, while we produce and secure additional PPE, we also need to safely conserve what we have. Specifically, our supply of N95 masks is top of mind for us and many other health systems due to an international shortage. This week we will implement a new PPE policy to ensure adequate protection for our health care workers in high-risk areas. Our new N95 conservation efforts will assign masks to all team members identified as high risk. Those team members will be provided use guidelines as well as instructions on how to properly put on, take off and store their masks between uses. In addition to distributing these masks to our frontline workers, we’ve also identified a process to safely sterilize and reuse these masks. This innovative solution will help extend the life of our limited supply while our team continues working to secure additional resources.

We are deeply committed to our team members who provide exceptional health care services for the communities we serve. Their health and safety will continue to be at the forefront of every decision that we make.

Please attribute this statement to Marjorie Bessel, MD, chief clinical officer, Banner Health

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<http://bannerhealth.mediaroom.com/N95policy0402>