



March 30, 2020

Dr. Cara Christ
Director, Arizona Department of Health Services
150 N 18th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Dr. Christ:

As hospital and healthcare leaders in Arizona, we commend the recent actions taken to protect Arizonans from this deadly new virus that has swept our world and changed the way we live, work and play in Arizona.

While we fully appreciate the difficult decisions made to date, we implore you to not only continue this effort, but take further steps to assure the health and safety of Arizonans. We must resolve in our collective challenge to slow the spread of COVID-19 and flatten the curve through widespread and ***aggressive social distancing, broad based testing and innovative personal protective gear procurement.***

Social Distancing

Our Arizona health system is working hard to expand bed capacity, however, if people don't adhere to aggressive social distancing, we **will not** be able to cope with the projected number of people who will need hospitalization. We are already seeing bed shortages in Northern Arizona due to the fast pace of infection amongst the tribal community. This will continue throughout the state and can only be mitigated with a more aggressive social distancing posture. We implore you to work with the Governor to immediately issue a "shelter in place" order to enhance the recent social distancing directives in place.

Personal Protective Equipment

Given the shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), we are deeply concerned about protecting the health of our healthcare workforce. If we are not able to protect our healthcare workforce, we face dangerous ramifications in an inability to provide care in a patient surge scenario. How can we help you pursue aggressive and innovative solutions to meet the PPE needs of our Arizona medical professionals through mobilizing procurement and manufacturing efforts at the statewide level? Our clinicians are acting selflessly to protect all Arizonans—we need to protect them.

COVID-19 Testing

Testing provides valuable information for clinicians as they develop treatment plans and advise patients about the need to isolate themselves and their contacts, improves public health's ability to better characterize the epidemic for intervention purposes and is critical as healthcare institutions develop and implement strategies to protect and care for patients and staff. Sadly, Arizona has lagged behind many other states in terms of the percentage of our citizens who have been tested for COVID-19. How can we support bold steps to increase the number of test kits available to Arizona, including pursuing test kits from outside the United States?

We recognize this is a very challenging situation, and, no decision will be popular with all Arizonans. However, we firmly believe that we must:

-Increase COVID-19 testing

-Implement a “shelter in place” order

-Rally resources to obtain needed PPE

We feel these actions are necessary to best weather this storm and keep Arizonans as safe as possible. Thank you for your work and dedication to the health of all Arizonans.

In good health,



Ann-Marie Alameddini
President and Chief Executive Officer
Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association



Peter Fine
President and Chief Executive Officer
Banner Health



Will Humble
Executive Director
Arizona Public Health Association



Linda Hunt
Sr. VP Operations and CEO, Arizona
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Blue Cross Blue Shield of AZ



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Arizona LeadingAge



Todd LaPorte
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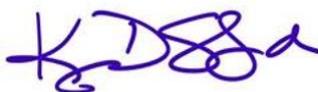


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cc: Governor Ducey
Christina Corieri