



Maryland Chapter

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF
EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS

July 16, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor, State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Personal Protective Equipment in Emergency Departments

Dear Governor Hogan:

On behalf of the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (MDACEP), I applaud the work you are doing to keep Marylanders safe and to acknowledge the importance of the steps you have taken to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the state. As president of MDACEP, this letter is to draw your attention to an area of critical importance to me and my colleagues - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Practicing emergency physicians, nurses, and healthcare professionals across the state depend heavily on a robust supply of PPE to reduce the risk of healthcare worker transmission of the coronavirus.

In May of this year, MDACEP conducted a survey of PPE utilization of emergency physician members and non-members across the State. Seventy-one responses were provided by 63 physicians, 6 physician assistants and 2 nurse practitioners, representing at least 26 different emergency departments across the State. As expected, the majority of respondents endorsed having greater access to N-95 masks, gowns, gloves, and face shields. What is most concerning is the high degree of reuse of PPE that the respondents revealed. The most commonly reused PPE items were N-95 masks (96.55%), face shields (79.31%), PAPR hoods (65.52%), goggles (55.17%), and surgical masks (48.28%). Of most concern, 46% cited running out of N-95s and 36% cited indefinite use of their N-95 masks. There are numerous articles citing the loss of integrity of N-95 masks and the increased risk of transmission through indefinite use of these masks.

As frontline workers in the fight against COVID-19, our overlying message is that despite reduced numbers of hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19 in the State, we need to remain focused on the importance of PPE in the coming months. If, and when, there is a second wave, we need to be prepared. We hope that you and your leadership team remain focused on the importance of this issue and continue to keep frontline workers at the forefront of your efforts. Maryland's emergency physicians need access to new PPE, not reused PPE. While the purchase of equipment to sanitize PPE may have been prudent in March and April, now is the time for Maryland to ensure that adequate supplies are present now and for future use.

Maryland's emergency physicians are dedicated and stand ready to provide exceptional care to our patients in the safest way possible. We would be happy to have further discussions with you and your team regarding PPE and COVID-19.

Thank you for your time and attention to this crucial issue.

Sincerely,



Robert Linton II, MD, MBA, FACEP
President, ACEP Maryland Chapter

cc: Roy McGrath, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office
Robert R. Neall, Secretary, Maryland Department of Health
Dennis R. Schrader, COO and Medicaid Director, Maryland Department of Health
Diane M. Croghan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor's Office

MARYLAND ACEP CHAPTER

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