EMS Policy Memorandum No. 2020-10

DATE: March 20, 2020

TO: All Prehospital Care Providers

FROM: Katherine Shafer, M.D., EMS Medical Director

SUBJ.: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide direction on implementing Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-27-20 for maintaining an adequate healthcare workforce. This memorandum is effective through April 30, 2020, unless superseded or rescinded earlier. This memorandum supersedes those parts of Policy Memorandum No. 2020-05 addressing the use of PPE by prehospital care personnel.

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom announced a statewide shelter in place order with the goal of flattening the disease curve and driving down rates of transmission and infection throughout the State of California.

Based on my medical judgment and the most recent published research and recommendations from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), I am directing prehospital care service providers to implement the following actions:

Required PPE:

1. All personnel providing direct patient care shall don gloves, eye protection and facemask (N-95/P100 respirator, surgical mask or face shield mask) for all patient contacts regardless of chief compliant.
2. All personnel when performing or assisting with aerosol-generating procedures (nebulizers, intubation, I-gel placement, ventilation and CPAP) shall don gloves, eye protection, N-95/P100 respirator, and gown.
3. All personnel providing direct patient care to a patient with a positive lab result for COVID-19 that has not been asymptomatic for a minimum of 14 days or has symptoms of an acute respiratory illness shall don gloves, eye protection, and N-95/P100 respirator.

Discussion: Throughout my reading of literature, case reports, CDC and WHO guidance it is becoming clear that COVID-19 has a significant amount of asymptomatic, minimally symptomatic or atypical patient presentations. This disease has a real impact on the elderly, patients with comorbidities, and healthcare workers including prehospital care personnel.
This aggressive approach to PPE use is necessary to protecting patients, first responders, prehospital care personnel and hospital personnel.

Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of PPE:


Three general strata have been used to describe surge capacity and can be used to prioritize measures to conserve N95/P100 respirator supplies along the continuum of care.

- **Conventional capacity**: measures consist of providing patient care without any change in daily contemporary practices. This set of 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 may change daily contemporary practices but may not have any significant impact on the care delivered to the patient or the safety of the HCP. These practices may be used temporarily when demands exceed resources.
- **Crisis capacity**: 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 N95 respirator shortages.


Resource Requesting:

SJCEMSA coordinates all medical and health mutual aid resource requests within San Joaquin County. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has a mutual-aid supply of N-95 respirators and other PPE to help supplement the normal PPE supply chain. The EMS DOC Logistics Branch is available to assist with resource ordering Monday through Friday from 0700-1800 by contacting 209-468-6818 or by email with subject “Resource Request” to: emsdutyofficer@sjgov.org.

Detailed information on how to request resources is available here:
- [https://www.sjgov.org/ems/PDF/HowtoRequestMedHealthPPEinWebEOCQRG.pdf](https://www.sjgov.org/ems/PDF/HowtoRequestMedHealthPPEinWebEOCQRG.pdf)
- [https://www.sjgov.org/ems/videos/How_to_Request_MH_MA_PPE.mp4](https://www.sjgov.org/ems/videos/How_to_Request_MH_MA_PPE.mp4)

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, you may direct questions to me through Matthew Esposito, Prehospital Care Coordinator mesposito@sjgov.org or (209) 468-6818.