

**The Fight Against Covid-19
A Call to Action for America**

Issued by the:

**American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)
American Association of Respiratory Care (AARC)
American Nurses Association (ANA)
American Thoracic Society (ATS)
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN)
Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)
Society for Critical Care Medicine (SCCM)**

This is everyone's battle.

Everyone has a moral obligation to participate in the fight.

A moral obligation is not defined by law, but by what we, as people, know is right.

On behalf of the 18 million plus nurses, doctors, respiratory therapists and other healthcare workers, we call upon the government, private sector and each American citizen to uphold your moral obligation by joining us in fighting the battle against coronavirus and the resulting Covid-19 disease.

We must have Personal Protective Equipment.

The critical shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) is putting the healthcare workforce, patients and American citizens at risk. Each time healthcare workers are potentially exposed to the virus, the risk of spread increases. Each time healthcare workers contract the virus, our healthcare system loses another caregiver and is weakened. Each time a healthcare worker is unable to work due to illness or quarantine, patients are at risk. We require:

- Procurement – Federal and state governments, industry and donors are implored to use their resources to procure PPE from all available domestic and international sources. We are encouraged by examples of this, but more is needed.
- Production – The federal government must act immediately to fully enact the Defense Production Act requiring American industry to produce PPE. In the absence of this action, we urge Congress to pass the Medical Supply Chain Emergency Act which would require the administration to fully utilize DAP and ensure the production of PPE. Beyond federal action, the generous volunteerism of numerous businesses to produce PPE has been inspiring. We are grateful and ask others to follow suit to voluntarily begin production.
- Distribution – The equitable distribution of PPE is the ethical duty of the government and suppliers. Bidding wars, price gouging and hoarding defy the moral obligation to support this battle and put lives at risk.
- Innovation – From 3-D printing to new sanitization methods, American ingenuity is demonstrating new possibilities and developing cutting-edge solutions. We commend the scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs doing this work. Without sacrificing safety, we ask that regulations and other barriers that slow delivery of these technologies to the frontline be lifted.

We must have life-saving equipment, medications and supplies.

The deficit of life-saving equipment, medications and supplies will be paid in American lives lost. Many patients with COVID-19 require prolonged mechanical ventilation to fight the disease. Without ventilators and the medications necessary to safely manage these critically ill patients, many more will die. Faced with the inability to properly care for patients, clinicians can experience moral distress and

the possibility of clinician burnout is accelerated. This can result in an immediate inability to work at one's full capacity and, in the long-term, increases the risk of caregivers developing PTSD. If a large number of providers are impacted, the healthcare system will face an even greater shortage of providers in the future.

As stated above, procurement, production, distribution and innovation will be necessary in order to meet the current and upcoming demand.

- Medical device manufacturers – In addition to increasing your own development of equipment, we implore you to partner with other industries who are converting their manufacturing facilities to produce ventilators and other equipment. Additionally, the donation or loan of any equipment you have is requested.
- Pharmaceutical companies – A quick response to the emerging shortage of necessary medications is needed. Preliminary reports of your actions are encouraging.
- Colleges and Universities – Academic institutions are requested to immediately loan any medical equipment and supplies to the healthcare facilities in their communities.

We must stop the spread.

New evidence and understanding about coronavirus is emerging daily. Based on current evidence, we know that the virus is quickly and easily spread between individuals. To stem the spread of the virus, the White House, CDC, state and local government issued guidelines and orders to limit gatherings and personal contact. With these precautions in place, the U.S. death toll is still expected to exceed 60,000. If we fail to adhere to the guidelines, the American lives lost could reach into the millions. As citizens it is our moral obligation to act now to save lives.

- Practice Social Distancing – To limit the chance of contracting or spreading the virus, keep at least 6 feet between yourself and people outside of your home. It is vital to remember that people can spread the virus even when they are not showing symptoms. To assist with social distancing, avoid crowded places and do not gather in groups with people who do not live in your home.
- Stay at Home – Adhere to the state and local orders to stay at home except when shopping for essential items, exercising outdoors, or going to vital doctor's appointments. Even if your area isn't under a mandatory order, voluntarily staying at home is critical to stopping the spread of this virus.
- Wear Cloth Face Coverings – This virus can be spread by people even when there is no physical evidence of symptoms. Therefore, the CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings and continue to maintain social distancing.

As your healthcare providers, we honor the trust you put in us to fulfill our moral obligation of providing optimal care for you when you are ill. We now put our trust in you to fulfill your moral obligation. Join us in this fight. Together we can stop this virus.