



Office of
Representative Carole Fiola
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

April 10, 2020

Baker-Polito Administration Provides Update On Hospital Surge Capacity

BOSTON – Today, the Baker-Polito Administration provided an update on the Commonwealth’s hospital capacity and efforts to add more beds to the system to meet the expected surge in COVID-19 cases. The Administration also announced that the Department of Public Health will issue a Public Health Advisory that people should wear a mask or cover their faces in public when they cannot safely socially distance.

Hospital Surge Capacity: The Administration’s COVID-19 Response Command Center released its initial projections on the surge last week. Since then, the Command Center has remained in regular contact with the Commonwealth’s hospitals on a daily basis as they work to increase acute and ICU bed capacity. As of today, the Commonwealth has worked to make a total of approximately 14,500 treatment beds available ahead of the surge:

- 11,000 beds could be available for ICU and acute care in the existing hospital system. This represents a breakdown of roughly 9,400 acute care beds and 1,500 ICU beds.
- Through hospital surge planning and field hospitals, the Commonwealth is bringing approximately 3,500 new beds online for ICU and acute care. This breaks down to approximately 2,500 new hospital beds coming online from hospital surge planning, and 1,000 beds coming online through field hospitals.

The Command Center continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on different regions and tracking how many hospital beds are available across the Commonwealth. As of today, hospitals have reported that 8,100 beds are occupied now statewide, or approximately 55% (this figure includes hospitalizations for non COVID-19 patients). This means that 6,400 beds are currently available for both ICU and acute care, or roughly 45%.

Field Hospitals: In the coming days, hundreds of new beds will come online that will help the Commonwealth significantly ramp up care capacity ahead of the surge to support existing hospitals. The Command Center is targeting five alternate care sites. These field hospitals will serve as an alternative site for hospitals to treat patients, particularly individuals who need acute care. They are being built all around the state to ensure all residents have access to this emergency care. The field hospital at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center will open today. Field hospitals at the DCU Center in

Worcester and Newton Pavilion started accepting patients yesterday. Over the coming week, additional facilities will open up in Cape Cod, Springfield, and Lowell. All in, these facilities will provide approximately 1,000 additional beds for patients who do not require ICU-level care.

The Administration is grateful to federal partners and to the hospital systems of UMass Memorial, Partners Healthcare, Beth Israel Lahey, Cape Cod Hospital, Baystate Hospital, and Lowell General for their efforts to stand facilities these up.

Mask / Face Covering Advisory: Later today, the Department of Public Health will issue a Public Health Advisory that, consistent with CDC guidance, recommends that people wear a mask or cover their face in public when they cannot safely socially distance. For example, members of the public will be advised to wear something to cover their face in public places like supermarkets and pharmacies.

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