

COVID-19 Preparedness & Community Impact

December 1, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

UConn Health has implemented a comprehensive COVID-19 surge plan based on state, county, and hospital COVID-19 positive volumes and prevalence rates.



- **Secured current sufficient PPE to maintain at least 60 days of operation** at our maximum COVID usage, in addition to handling 100% of our non-COVID capacity.
- **Implemented enhanced monitoring of stock** to ensure adherence to proper conservation measures and allow faster identification of potential shortages.



- Developed ongoing relationships with **seven well-vetted vendors** to expand available options for fulfilling institutional needs.
- Testing supplies stocked to perform **300-400 tests daily**.
- **Testing tent relocated** to Garage 1 to accommodate testing during inclement weather.



- **Pedestrian testing site established** to meet the needs of people who utilize public transportation.
- Ongoing and sustained **employee screening program**, with four phases completed.
- UConn Health utilizes four unique predictive models to forecast number of **hospitalized COVID-19 positive patients**.



- UConn Health established a variety of resources to **ensure the safety of our community**, from clinical support to facility improvements to academic and research endeavors.

COMPREHENSIVE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Clinical Resources:



- Established a **dedicated COVID Call Center** staffed by physicians and nurses.
- Established **dedicated biocontainment areas** within UConn John Dempsey Hospital units for COVID positive patients.
- **Established safe campus community for patients, visitors and employees**, through visitation restrictions and consolidating 44 points of entry on the Farmington campus to 14 fully staffed screening stations.



- Implemented a **drive-through testing site** which has collected over 16,000 test samples to date.
- Implemented the **first triage site in the state** as part of our ED to evaluate suspected COVID patients.



- **Established a COVID-19 Think Tank** composed of faculty to review, evaluate, and summarize the most current studies and literature relating to COVID-19 to guide our treatment and safety protocols.



- **Provided testing** for pre-operative and pre-procedure patients, the UConn community (student athletes, students, faculty & other employees), outside entities (Jackson Laboratory, private schools, DEEP firefighters, etc.), and symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals in the greater community.
- **Shifted healthcare appointments to virtual visits** (telephone and video visits), with approximately 40% of our visits conducted via telehealth portals during the pandemic peak.
- **Implemented new technology** (20 devices) to allow inpatients and their loved ones to visit by video through secure iPad connections.



- Leveraged our information technology systems to **develop a bi-directional interface with The Jackson Laboratory**, facilitating over 370,000 tests from seven sites.
- **Selected as one of the four sites in the state** for initial vaccine distribution, responsible for vaccinating our own healthcare workers and those in the greater Farmington region.





FACILITY MODIFICATIONS

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- **Reduced seating for social distancing,** added 6 ft. distance markers at all campus desks and locations, including over 36 clinical waiting rooms and 25 common areas throughout the institution.
- **Installed plexiglass at all check-in locations,** including more than 70

patient-facing points, and more than 195 plexiglass installations for team work rooms throughout the health system.



- **Expanded our license,** at one point to a maximum of 680 beds, to accommodate influx of patients.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



- **Mask Manufacturing:** Within six weeks of announcing a successful method to fabricate custom-fit mask frames to optimize production from the spread of COVID-19, UConn Health's Connecticut Convergence Institute for Translation in Regenerative Engineering has a licensing deal with a Connecticut manufacturer to produce them.

CRISPR-based diagnostic platform to detect infectious diseases, including the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).

- **Intubation Hood:** Two UConn Health doctors have devised a piece of equipment to protect health care workers from contagion while intubating COVID-19 patients.



- **Oral Rinse Development:** Faculty from UConn Health have proven that a simple method of rinsing with a diluted version of over-the-counter Povidone-Iodine oral rinse can kill viruses like the SARS CoV-2 coronavirus and prevent transmission.
- **Diagnostic Testing:** Researchers of the Department of Biomedical Engineering — a shared department in the schools of Dental Medicine, Medicine, and Engineering — have been working to develop a new, low-cost,

TIP

- **UConn Health TIP Companies:** UConn's Technology Incubation Program (TIP) remains open, allowing companies to maintain business activity. TIP startups ImStem and CaroGen are working on technologies to help address the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **COVID Rapid Start Fund:** UConn's Office of the Vice President for Research created a new fund to advance COVID-19 related projects. Two research teams from UConn Health received \$50K each to advance their technologies.



SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS



- **With the state and National Guard**, UConn Health repurposed physical space in its Connecticut Tower and University Tower to provide a surge capacity of 446 beds.
- Collaborated with the **Department of Correction** to provide a seamless process for the assessment and transfer of COVID-19 positive inmates to the hospital, and to share best practices with DOC to support the care that agency provides within its facilities.



- In partnership with the **UConn Foundation**, more than \$1 million of supplies and monetary donations were accepted or raised to support the UConn Health COVID-19 response.
- Engagement of over 160 health and pre-health professions students through **CT AHEC program** to provide 4,766 community "touches," including participation at community-based COVID testing sites, telephonic monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms and basic needs gaps as well as distribution of COVID Cares bags containing face masks, hand sanitizer, thermometers and CDC prevention guidelines.