



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

March 18, 2020

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Senator Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Medical Society, representing over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in the Commonwealth, I write to thank you for your letter urging Secretary Azar and Assistant Secretary Kadlec to respond to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's request for personal protective equipment (PPE) from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). Massachusetts is currently facing an imminent, dire shortage of PPE, posing a substantial risk to our front-line health care workers and impeding the medical community's collective ability to effectively respond to the crisis.

While we greatly appreciate the diligent efforts of our Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the shortage of PPE is becoming a critical threat, especially as hospitalizations for COVID-19 patients have increased dramatically, in some instances quadrupling overnight. It's not just hospital systems that are facing shortages. The Medical Society continues to receive increasingly distressed inquiries from smaller physician practices as well. In one such instance, a small physician practice on the North Shore has the testing capability to address high demand for testing among sick patients but is down to three N95 masks. Because of this shortage in PPE, this practice is not able to maximally utilize the test kits they possess while also keeping their staff safe from potential exposure.

While meaningful efforts have been made to preserve existing supplies, through expansion of the use of telehealth and mandated cancellation of non-essential elective procedures, additional PPE will no doubt remain critical. We also must ensure that additional supplies are equitably distributed, both geographically and based on highest need and highest likelihood of running out of supplies. On behalf of the physician community, thank you again for your continued advocacy and support. Please let us know how the Medical Society may be of assistance in your efforts.

Sincerely,

Maryanne C. Bombaugh, MD, MSc, MBA, FACOG

CC: Senator Ed Markey
Representatives Neal, McGovern, Trahan, Kennedy, Clark, Moulton, Pressley, Lynch & Keating