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Iowa Health Care Association encourages businesses to donate Personal Protective Equipment to long-term care providers

The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA) recognizes Iowa trade associations who are encouraging businesses that may have excess personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies – face masks, gloves and gowns – to donate or sell those supplies to Iowa’s long-term care providers. IHCA works with nursing facilities, assisted living communities and home health agencies that care for the state’s elderly and most vulnerable residents. These residents are also in the highest risk category for the COVID-19 virus.

“Long-term care employees are on the frontlines of caring for Iowa’s most vulnerable residents, and PPE is an important line of defense in their protection during a COVID-19 outbreak,” said Brent Willett, president and CEO of the Iowa Health Care Association. “Long-term care workers need to be a priority when PPE is being distributed, and our association is extremely grateful to those who have volunteered to help us protect the safety of our long-term care workers and residents.”

IHCA has been working with a number of Iowa trade associations, who are reaching out to their members to encourage them to donate supplies to the healthcare community. Those associations include the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, Associated General Contractors of Iowa, Iowa Limestone Producers Association, Iowa Restaurant Association, Iowa Veterinary Medical Association, Master Builders of Iowa, Iowa Optometric Association and Sheet Metal Contractors of Iowa, Inc. In addition, the association has been working with volunteer maker groups, such as Area 515, who are making face shields and masks for health care providers.

“Supplies across the country are limited and getting new distribution sources online takes time,” added Willett. “In the meantime, we ask that anyone who can to donate PPE supplies, consider a donation to a long-term care provider. Examples of businesses that typically use PPE include builders, manufacturers, dentists, veterinarians, hair salons and tattoo artists. With new state protocols in place to limit COVID-19 exposure, some of these businesses may be experiencing a temporary decline in their need for PPE. At the same time, health care providers, and especially long-term care providers, have seen an increased need for PPE to care for patients who have the virus. We welcome the opportunity to partner with these organizations to share PPE with those who will need it most.”

What is Needed

The following is a list of supplies needed. Full boxes of supplies are preferable, but partial boxes or individual donations are acceptable if the supplies are clean.

- N95 masks
- Surgical or procedure masks
- Exam gloves
- Surgical gowns
- Medical face shields
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer

(more)

How You Can Help

To donate PPE supplies, call your local long-term care provider. Let them know the number and type of supplies available. To find your local long-term care provider, visit iowahealthcare.org and click on Care Finder to search for providers in your city/town.

If you don't have supplies to donate, and like to sew, consider making masks. The Iowa Department of Public Health has released guidance on how homemade face masks should be constructed. Follow the guidance here: <https://bit.ly/2Jyea8P>.

IHCA has also been working to connect long-term care providers and state and county health officials to monitor current inventories to ensure PPE is distributed to those who need it most as new supplies becomes available. **Long-term care providers should report their PPE needs to their local emergency management coordinators.** A list of emergency management coordinators can be found on the IHCA COVID-19 webpage at iowahealthcare.org.

About the Iowa Health Care Association

The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA) and its divisions, Iowa Center for Assisted Living (ICAL) and Iowa Center for Home Care (IHC) represent 790 Iowa organizations that provide long-term care to Iowans through nursing facilities, assisted living, residential care, senior living communities and home health agencies.

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