

COVID-19

Weekly Digest



March 27, 2020

Academy Actions

The Academy [sent a letter](#) on March 23rd requesting **Congress** work quickly and pass critical legislation (the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act) with increased resources needed for nurses, healthcare providers, hospitals, as well as the public health and research infrastructures to combat coronavirus.

- **BREAKING: CARES ACT PASSED AND ADVANCES TO PRESIDENT:** This legislation passed the Senate on 3/25, 96-0, and the House of Representatives passed by voice-vote this afternoon. It is now sent to the President for signature. Important aspects of the legislation include:
 - \$100 billion for grants to hospitals, public and nonprofit health organizations and Medicare and Medicaid suppliers, including a 20% bump in Medicare payments for treating patients with the virus;
 - This is the same amount the American Hospital Association, American Medical Association, and American Nurses Association requested. The Academy included this request in our [letter](#) to Congress.
 - \$20 billion will go towards veterans' health care;
 - \$16 billion will go to the Strategic National Stockpile to increase the availability of equipment, including ventilators and masks. It also boosts the hiring for vital health care jobs and speeds the development of a vaccine, treatments, and faster diagnostic;
 - \$11 billion for diagnostics, treatments, and vaccines;
 - This includes \$80 million for the Food and Drug Administration and \$945 million to the National Institutes of Health
 - \$4.3 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
 - \$1.32 billion in immediate funding for community centers through November that provide health services for roughly 28 million people;
 - Other health care related provisions:
 - The bill reauthorizes a telehealth program to extend the reach of virtual doctors' appointments;
 - Authorizes nurse practitioners and certified nurse specialists to certify home health care for patients; and
 - Reauthorizes Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs.
- [Read more here.](#)

3/22: The Academy [sent a letter](#) to the **President** urging for heightened federal action and calling for immediate use of his authority under the Defense Production Act (DPA) to increase production of critically needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies for nurses and healthcare workers as the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic becomes increasingly dire. *This letter was a follow-up to the 3/18 **Coronavirus Taskforce** briefing at*

the White House. Read the Academy's [statement](#).

This week, messages were also sent to [Academy Fellows](#) and [CANS members](#), thanking them for their work in addressing the pandemic through their efforts to provide care to patients in need, offer support to families, educate the public, conduct research, and provide leadership to address fears and misconceptions within their communities.

From the Front Lines



The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps is an elite team of more than 6,500 full-time, well-trained, highly-qualified public health professionals whose mission is to protect the health and safety of our nation. [Rear Admiral Sylvia Trent-Adams](#), PhD, RN, FNAP, FAAN, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health and [Rear Admiral Susan](#)

[Orsega](#), MSN, FNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN, Director of Commission Corps Headquarters are on the USPHS leadership team representing corps members, including nurses and nurse practitioners, that are on the front line battling this pandemic.

News & Updates from National Organizations

- COVID-19 Conversations with **NAM** and the American Public Health Association
 - *The Science of Social Distancing Part 1:* listen to the [recorded presentation](#). For more information, please visit the [NAM website](#).
- **American Nurses Association (ANA)** webinar recording available for all nurses: [Be Confident in Protecting Yourself and Providing the Best Care to Your Patients during this COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- **Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF)** [releases](#) state data and policy actions to address coronavirus, including state breakdown of coronavirus cases, tests available, rates of positive tests, and more.
- A special **Kaiser Health News (KHN)** [report](#) shows that more than half the counties in the U.S. have no ICU beds, posing a particular danger to patients age 60 or older who fall victim to the coronavirus.
- **Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research (FNINR)** is [collecting stories](#) about nurse scientists on the front line of the pandemic to shine a light on the critical role they play.



Federal Government Response

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA)

- Underlying Medical Conditions and People at Higher Risk for COVID-19 [webinar recording](#).
- COVID-19 Update and Information for Long-term Care Facilities [webinar recording](#).
- Optimization Strategies for Healthcare PPE [webinar recording](#).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Activity

- CMS Announces [Findings](#) at Kirkland Nursing Home and New Targeted Plan for Healthcare Facility Inspections in light of COVID-19. Access the Kirkland, Washington Update and Survey Prioritization [Fact Sheet](#).
- CMS provides guidelines for the [State Plan Amendment \(SPA\)](#), which includes the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage.

Office of the National Coordinator for Health and Information Technology

- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and University Medical Center shared their success story in adopting, implementing, and evaluating a rapid deployment infectious disease module to react promptly to infectious disease threats. [Watch the webinar](#) for more information.



Photo Credit: Allison Swendsen, nurse at Morristown Medical Center in NJ

(Source: ABC7NY)

COVID-19 Resources

Policy News

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American Academy of Nursing
Washington, DC

info@aannet.org | www.aannet.org | 202-777-1170