



**California
Nurses
Association**



**National
Nurses
United**

A Voice for Nurses. A Vision for Health Care.

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Dr. Sonia Y. Angell, State Public Health Officer and Director
California Department of Public Health
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cdph.internetadmin@cdph.ca.gov

Dr. Bela T. Matyas, Health Officer
Solano County Public Health
PO Box 4090, MS 5-240
Fairfield, CA 94553
btmatyas@solanocounty.com

Dr. Wilma Wooten, Health Officer
San Diego County Public Health Services
3851 Rosecrans St., Rm L-15, MS P-578
San Diego, CA 92110
Wilma.wooten@sdcountry.ca.gov

Re: Transfers of Quarantined COVID-19 Patients

February 19, 2020

Dear Director Angell and Health Officers Matyas and Wooten:

SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19, recently emerged in China and spreading around the world, is a newly identified virus, but this is not a novel situation. Unfortunately, the world has seen several similar infectious disease events in recent decades—SARS, MERS, H1N1 influenza, Ebola, and others—and this is unlikely to be the last. Each successive event has underlined the importance of a strong public health infrastructure and the need for our healthcare facilities to be prepared to treat patients safely and to stop further spread of the disease.

The California Nurses Association/National Nurses United (CNA/NNU) represents the direct care registered nurses across California and the United States who are on the frontlines of every infectious disease event. Nurses vow to advocate for the health and safety of their patients, in healthcare facilities and in the community. During events like the COVID-19 outbreak, nurses' advocacy includes fighting to ensure healthcare facilities remain safe places for patients to seek care and for nurses and other healthcare workers to provide care.

Multiple U.S. government agencies have taken steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the United States, including quarantining individuals returning from affected locations or who have had other exposures. On several occasions in the past few weeks, patients in quarantine in California have been sent to local hospitals for further assessment, medical care, and isolation. But nurses and their union, CNA/NNU, have received no notice about the arrival of these patients nor any information about arrangements made ahead of time for safely transferring patients.

CNA/NNU members have identified significant issues in many hospitals' preparedness to safely isolate and treat patients with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infections. Nurses and CNA/NNU could be working with our federal, state, and local public health agencies to ensure that patients receive the best and safest care possible and to ensure that healthcare facilities are prepared to prevent further spread of COVID-19. But we cannot do that without clear and open communication.

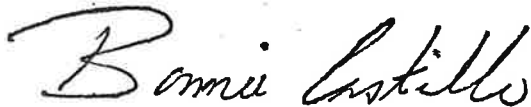
Therefore, CNA/NNU hereby requests state and local public health agencies communicate with us about all arrangements, plans, and actions taken for patients to be transferred from quarantine for COVID-19 to local healthcare facilities.

CNA/NNU also requests a full accounting of all state stockpiles of respirators and other PPE to protect healthcare workers and the public during an infectious disease event, including at a minimum the current stock (numbers of each type, model, and size) and corresponding expiration dates, procedures used to monitor conditions at each warehouse and an update on current conditions in each warehouse, and any other information necessary to ascertain whether current stockpiles will be in usable condition if needed.

Nurses, as always, will be on the front lines of every infectious disease event. That is our members' social contract with the public. Healthcare employers' social contract with nurses and patients should be to furnish them with the highest standards of protection.

If you have questions or would like to meet regarding these issues, please reach out to Jane Thomason at 510-433-2771. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie Castillo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bonnie Castillo, RN
Executive Director
California Nurses Association/National Nurses United

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom
Mark Ghaly, Secretary, Health and Human Services Agency
Hon. Dr. Richard Pan, Chair Senate Health Committee
Hon. Jim Wood, Chair Assembly Health Committee
County Public Health Officers