

The Work of Hospital Allied and Supportive Care Providers During COVID-19



the E **X** *CHANGE*

ASPR
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE



TRACIE
HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
INFORMATION GATEWAY

FOREWORD

The Work of Hospital Allied and Supportive Care Providers During COVID-19

COVID-19 pushed our healthcare system to respond in new, demanding, and historic ways. These challenges accelerated many changes, ranging from unprecedented scientific collaboration to the lightspeed acceleration of telemedicine utilization. But, amidst this challenge and change, one thing stayed constant: patient care is fundamentally a team effort. From reengineering patient rooms to ensuring prone patients are as comfortable as possible, from creating a virtual hospital at home to giving a patient a virtual tour of a place they wanted to see while they were in hospice care—the phenomenal effort that you, our nation’s healthcare emergency readiness and response professionals, have made over the past year has not gone unnoticed. ASPR recognizes and appreciates the immense sacrifices, and innovations, you and your peers continue to make.

In this issue of *The Exchange*, ASPR TRACIE strives to share the most valuable, timely, and helpful information for you and your colleagues on the significant contributions made by supportive care providers and healthcare engineering representatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. The articles in this issue focus on three categories: home care and hospice (including a virtual acute care delivery at home model), the role of allied healthcare providers (e.g., physical, occupational, and respiratory therapy), and engineering and environmental changes in response to the pandemic. The articles feature authors at the regional, state, and local levels, who represent urban, suburban, and rural areas of the country.

In the spirit of planning for spring storms, hurricane season, and other potential concurrent incidents, I encourage you to visit ASPR TRACIE’s [Natural Disasters Topic Collection and Hurricanes Resources Page](#), and continue to monitor the [National Institutes of Health Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Treatment Guidelines](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s pages on [2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) and [Influenza](#), and ASPR TRACIE’s [Novel Coronavirus Resources Page](#).

ASPR TRACIE develops resources in conjunction with partners, stakeholders, and other subject matter experts who have direct experiences in the field. Please [share](#) your own promising practices, lessons learned, or requests for technical assistance about COVID-19 so that others may learn from your experiences.

As always, we welcome your feedback.



Kacey Wulff
ASPR Chief of Staff

WELCOME TO ISSUE 13!

The [last issue of *The Exchange*](#) focused on COVID-19 and healthcare professional stress and resilience (with articles on acute and chronic stressors, identifying at-risk employees, and building resilience). In the year since a pandemic was declared, we have witnessed our nation's healthcare providers working collaboratively and tirelessly to care for patients, with surges calling for the reengineering of physical spaces and, often, the healthcare delivery model itself.

[ASPR TRACIE](#) has had the honor of working with subject matter experts (SMEs) to gather and share timely information throughout the pandemic. We recognize that many of our stakeholders work in healthcare facilities as part of a team, delivering comprehensive care to all patients during an extremely trying time. It is our goal to share with you existing articles, tools, quick sheets, and templates or develop new resources--all vetted by SMEs--that can help you learn more about and adopt progressive ways to maximize teamwork from a variety of perspectives.

Please refer to the [National Institutes of Health Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Treatment Guidelines](#) and [CDC's Coronavirus webpage](#), and our [Novel Coronavirus Resources page](#) for updates. Your feedback is what makes us successful—please [contact us](#) with your comments, questions, technical assistance needs, and resources to share. We look forward to our continued collaboration.

Shayne Brannman, Director, ASPR TRACIE

Dr. John L. Hick, Senior Editor

The ICF ASPR TRACIE Team:

Meghan Treber, Project Director

Audrey Mazurek, Deputy Project Director

Corina Solé Brito, Communications Manager and Technical Resources Lead

Bridget Kanawati, Assistance Center Lead

Jennifer Nieratko, Special Projects Manager

AT A GLANCE

5 COVID-19 and Acute Hospital Care, Home Care, and Hospice

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that acute hospital care, home care, and hospice could be provided virtually when necessary. These articles highlight a virtual acute care delivery at home model and how rural and urban home care and hospice providers adjusted their work to protect staff and patients.

7 The Role of Allied Healthcare Providers

From intake to discharge, patient care is a team effort. The articles in this section illustrate the work performed by respiratory, occupational, and physical therapists to ensure patient comfort and assist COVID-19 patients through the recovery process.

8 Engineering and Environmental Support during COVID-19

Many hospitals were not built to treat the significant patient surges that occurred in 2020. The first article in this section demonstrates how engineering and operations teams scrambled to update old and create new spaces that could accommodate patients with specific symptoms while keeping staff as safe as possible. The other article shares how environmental services staff had to rethink sanitizing rooms and common areas while wearing personal protective equipment.



WHAT'S NEW WITH ASPR?

The last issue of *The Exchange* was published in December 2020 and focused on COVID-19 and Healthcare Professional Stress and Resilience. In the months that have passed, HHS renewed both the [COVID-19](#) and [opioid](#) Public Health Emergency Declarations on January 7; check out the [PHE overview](#) and [frequently asked questions](#) (FAQ) to learn more.

Three vaccines have been approved for emergency use in the U.S. and our nation's scientists continue working to [develop therapeutics](#) to fight this novel virus. In February, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the [emergency use of the therapeutics bamlanivimab and etesevimab and one that uses both casirivimab and imdevimab](#); ASPR's [COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibody Therapeutics Digital Toolkit](#) can help localities spread the word about these treatments via social media. The [National Disaster Medical System](#) (NDMS) has collaborated with healthcare facilities across the country to [set up infusion centers](#) to treat high-risk COVID-19 patients; more than [2,500 NDMS responders have deployed](#) since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. [ASPR's Portfolio of COVID-19 Medical Countermeasures](#) includes additional treatment information.

February also found the entire State of Texas dealing with the aftermath of a historic winter storm; HHS determined that a [public health emergency existed](#) and issued a [Section 1135 waiver](#) "to ensure that sufficient health care items and services are available to meet the needs of individuals enrolled" in certain federal health programs.

In March, the Biden administration [announced a manufacturing collaboration](#) to expand the production of COVID-19 vaccines. HHS subsequently amended the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act, adding [categories of qualified people](#) to prescribe, dispense, and administer COVID-19 vaccines. Towards the end of the month, the Biden administration [invested \\$150 million to expand access to COVID-19 treatments in underserved communities](#). Volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps are supporting vaccination efforts across the nation.

Visit the [ASPR homepage](#) and [blog](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) to learn more about how ASPR is working to strengthen the nation's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.



COVID-19 and Acute Hospital Care, Home Care, and Hospice

SUMMARY

For a profession whose mission is to help terminally ill patients plan their final days and guide them and their loved ones through the passage emotionally and spiritually, a global pandemic presented the ultimate challenge. This was compounded in more rural areas, where home care and hospice workers are often one in the same. Patient surges lead some hospitals to set up virtual patient care models. This section highlights the challenges these fields were faced with and how they overcame them in 2020.

EXPERIENCES FROM THE FIELD

- [The Virtual Hospital at Home—Denver Health’s Experience Treating COVID-19 Patients Remotely](#)
- [Hospice and COVID-19](#)
- [Home Care and Hospice during COVID-19: A Rural Perspective](#)
- [The Experience of Chaplains during COVID-19](#)

ADDITIONAL ASPR TRACIE RESOURCES

- ASPR TRACIE TA: [Considerations for Homecare Actions in Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)
- ASPR TRACIE TA: [Direct Care Workforce Resources](#)
- ASPR TRACIE TA: [Palliative Care in COVID-19](#)
- ASPR TRACIE TA: [Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#)
- [COVID-19 Home-based Healthcare and Hospice Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Telemedicine/Virtual Medical Care Resources](#)
- [Denver Health Virtual Hospital at Home Speaker Series Presentation](#)
- [Homecare and Hospice](#) Topic Collection
- [Acute Care Delivery at Home Tip Sheet](#)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Interim Guidance for Home and Community Healthcare Workers](#)
- [COVID-19 Home Health/Home Care Guidance](#)
- [COVID-19 Response Resources Toolkit](#)
- [Crisis Standards of Care in Hospice & Palliative Care Emergency Management](#)
- [Ensuring Adequate Palliative and Hospice Care During COVID-19 Surges](#)

We were able to acquire virtual reality equipment. Our [hospice] nurses took that into patients who used the equipment to take “trips” around the world to places they had always wanted to see before they died.

Sarah McSpadden, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Elizabeth Hospice



The Role of Allied Healthcare Providers and COVID-19

SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how important team-based patient care is, from intake to discharge. The articles in this section illustrate the work performed by physical, respiratory, and occupational therapists to ensure patient comfort and assist COVID-19 patients through the recovery process.

EXPERIENCES FROM THE FIELD

- [The Role of the Physical Therapist in Pandemic Response](#)
- [Respiratory Therapy and COVID-19](#)
- [Occupational Therapy and COVID-19](#)

ADDITIONAL ASPR TRACIE RESOURCES

- ASPR TRACIE TA: [Considerations for Oxygen Therapy in Disasters](#)
- [COVID-19 Outpatient Resources](#)
- [The Role of the Physical Therapist in Pandemic Response Speaker Series Presentation](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Inpatient Occupational Therapy—Decision Guide for COVID-19](#)
- [Adult and Pediatric Outpatient Occupational Therapy Decision Guide for COVID-19](#)
- [OT Service Delivery Guide](#)

What compounded the challenge of training new staff was the information about the virus and patient care changing nearly every day. We were watching other countries' experiences and incorporating their lessons while they learned them. Staff safety balanced with providing the best patient care possible was the primary goal of the protocols we developed throughout that period. This was not a period of "business as usual plus busy," it was a period of "business changing every day plus very busy."

Katie Mattare, Clinical Coordinator for the Adult Respiratory Therapy Department at Johns Hopkins Hospital





A NorthShore Environmental Services team member wipes down and disinfects the windows inside an Emergency Department patient room. Photo credit: Jonathan Hillenbrand, NorthShore University

Engineering and Environmental Support during COVID-19

SUMMARY

Many hospitals were not built to treat the significant patient surges of COVID-positive patients in 2020. These articles focus on two critical facets of healthcare during a pandemic: updating old and creating new spaces to accommodate patients with specific symptoms while keeping staff as safe as possible, and sanitizing rooms and common areas and ensuring public safety in healthcare facilities during a pandemic.

EXPERIENCES FROM THE FIELD

- [Creating a COVID-19 Specialty Hospital](#)
- [Reconfiguring Spaces: How NorthShore University HealthSystem Met the COVID-19 Challenge](#)

ADDITIONAL ASPR TRACIE RESOURCES

- [COVID-19 Healthcare System Operations Resources](#)
- [COVID-19: Healthcare System Operations Strategies and Experiences](#) (Webinar)
- [Designated COVID-19 Hospitals: Case Studies and Lessons Learned](#)
- [Ensuring Healthcare Safety Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Webinar)
- [Healthcare Facility Hygiene Protocols](#)
- [Healthcare Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Speaker Series)
 - [Lessons Learned from a COVID-19 Designated Hospital Presentation](#)
 - [Creating a COVID-19 Specialty Hospital Presentation](#)
- [Hospital Operations Toolkit for COVID-19](#)
- [Maintaining Healthcare Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Speaker Series)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [COVID-19 Hospital Designation: Effect on Emergency Department Patient Self-Selection and Volume](#)
- [Lessons Learned at a COVID-19 Designated Hospital](#)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



TECHNICAL RESOURCES

In addition to our 57 [comprehensively developed Topic Collections](#), we recently worked with subject matter experts to publish 20 [COVID-19 Healthcare Planning Resource Collections](#). We continue to add resources to our Collections; check back often. You can also learn more about rating, commenting on, and saving resources [in this short tutorial](#).



ASSISTANCE CENTER

We have received hundreds of requests for [COVID-19-specific technical assistance](#) (TA); we encourage you to review those and our [summary of responses to select TA requests](#). [Check out this tutorial](#) for assistance navigating the Assistance Center.



INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Check out the [COVID-19 threads in the Information Exchange](#) (IE) to access what your colleagues are sharing and provide feedback. Don't have an account? [Register for the IE today](#), where you can share your opinions and resources with us and your colleagues. [Access our quick tutorial](#) for help with registration.

ASPR TRACIE

Your Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Information Gateway

The Exchange is produced by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE). Through the pages of *The Exchange*, emergency health professionals share firsthand experiences, information, and resources while examining the disaster medicine, healthcare system preparedness, and public health emergency preparedness issues that are important to the field. To receive *The Exchange*, visit <https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/register> and enter your email address.

ASPR TRACIE was created to meet the information and technical assistance needs of ASPR staff, healthcare coalitions, healthcare entities, healthcare providers, emergency managers, public health practitioners, and others working in disaster medicine, healthcare system preparedness, and public health emergency preparedness. The infographic illustrates ASPR TRACIE's reach since launching in September 2015.



ASPR TRACIE STATS



VISITORS
TO WEBSITE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
REQUESTS



>8,700

Types of professionals requesting TA:

- Healthcare Professional
- Federal, State, Local, Tribal Government
- Hospital
- Healthcare Coalition
- Healthcare Association
- Academia



NUMBER
OF SUBJECT MATTER
EXPERT CADRE MEMBERS:
>1,000

TOTAL RESOURCES
DEVELOPED



Most frequently accessed resources:

- Healthcare System Cybersecurity Readiness & Response Considerations
- EMS Infectious Disease Playbook
- Evaluation of HVA Tools
- COVID-19 Drive-Through Testing
- Considerations for the Use of Care Surge Sites for Managing Seasonal Patient Surge



INFORMATION
EXCHANGE MEMBERS:



ASPR TRACIE
DISTRIBUTION
LIST AND
PARTNER REACH: **>1.5M**

CONTACT US ASPR TRACIE

Toll-Free: 1-844-587-2243

askASPRtracie@hhs.gov

<https://asprtracie.hhs.gov>

The Exchange is not responsible for the information provided by any webpages, materials, or organizations referenced in this publication. Although *The Exchange* includes valuable articles and collections of information, ASPR does not necessarily endorse any specific products or services provided by public or private organizations unless expressly stated. In addition, ASPR does not necessarily endorse the views expressed by such sites or organizations, nor does ASPR warrant the validity of any information or its fitness for any particular purpose.