



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR RESPIRATORY CARE
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May 5, 2020

Mr. Jared Kushner
Senior Advisor to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Kushner:

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) and its Board of Medical Advisors applaud the Administration's recent action to increase the number of ventilators needed by hospitals throughout the country to combat the novel coronavirus. At a time when infections increase daily and deaths continue to rise, we need to do everything we can to save as many lives as possible.

While these live-saving devices are an essential commodity during this pandemic, equally important is the need to ensure they meet certain standards to maximize efficiency in treating the critically ill, such as those outlined in evidence-based medicine published by the American College of Chest Physicians titled "Surge Capacity Logistics, Care of the Critically Ill and Injured During Pandemics and Disasters: CHEST Consensus Statement" (CHEST 2014; 146(4_Suppl):e17S-e43S). Recently purchased ventilators represent 14 different models and, while it is the role of the AARC to ensure respiratory therapists are thoroughly trained and knowledgeable of the different components, less variation could speed up the process to ensure they meet the needs of critical care patients.

That is why we believe it is vital the Administration use the expertise of the AARC in an advisory role moving forward in any decisions that impact access to ventilators. The AARC is a national professional organization with membership of over 45,000 respiratory therapists and whose organizational activities impact over 150,000 practicing respiratory therapists across the country. Respiratory therapists are critical care experts in ventilator management and training who are in closest proximity to the patient managing their airways and supporting respiration. They are the essential front-line professionals working together with physicians and nurses to respond to the greatest needs of those infected with COVID-19. The physicians who comprise the AARC's Board of Medical Advisors include pulmonologists, asthma and allergy specialists, medical directors of respiratory care, anesthesiologists, sleep medicine and critical care physicians as well as specialists from the US Military and Veterans Administration.

We encourage you to use our expertise to help make a difference. Please reach out to Tom Kallstrom, AARC's Executive Directors and Chief Executive Office for further information and details as to the role we can play in assisting the Administration in combating COVID-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen S. Schell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen S. Schell, DHSc, RRT-NPS, RRT-SDS,
RPFT, RPSGT, AE-C, CTTA
President, AARC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter J. Papadacos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter J. Papadacos, MD, FCCM, FCCP, FAARC
Chair, Board of Medical Advisors, AARC
Director, Critical Care Medicine, University of Rochester