COVID-19 Support for Affiliated Organizations
March 24, 2020

There are moments in each organization’s history that define it – and shape its very culture. For Atrium Health, it’s during the challenging times that the strength of our system shines bright through some of the darkest times. When Hurricane Florence roared through our coast and state, Atrium Health was a life vest to those that needed it most – including to New Hanover Regional Medical Center – whether it was flying in nurses and support care teams, or sending our mobile hospital, MED-1, to care for a community that lost access to critical care. And now, as we face a disease the world has rarely seen the likes of, we are here again. More than ever, in the middle of a global pandemic, Atrium Health is rushing in to assist those who need it the most across our region, because we’re all in this together.

As the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) impacts our country and, in particular, our region, Atrium Health is leading the way in providing leadership and support for our health delivery system across the Carolinas and Georgia. At the early onset of this pandemic, Atrium Health stood up its Enterprise Incident Command center on March 6, 2020, as a means to better manage the rapidly evolving situation across the region and the impacts to our healthcare system. As part of this focused effort, Atrium Health has been directly engaging with all of our partner organizations across the region on a daily basis. Below provides a listing of general ongoing support to each of our owned, managed and affiliated health systems:

- **Clinical Expertise** – Access to Atrium Health’s clinical expertise, particularly our Infectious Disease specialists, when confronted with complicated patients who may be exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Supply Chain Support** – Through the Atrium Health Supply Chain Alliance, Atrium Health is able to better address critical supply shortages across our region. See below for more details of how we are assisting partner organizations and, in particular, NHRMC.
- **Enterprise Incident Command Briefings** – Atrium Health’s Enterprise Incident Command briefings take place three times per week. All affiliated organizations have open access to participate in these briefings to keep abreast of the latest intelligence available on COVID-19.
- **Direct Daily Touchpoints** - Multiple daily touchpoints with Atrium Health leadership to talk through current and evolving challenges (hospital and ambulatory). These have been instrumental in identifying where Atrium Health can help further and providing a quick connection to experts within Atrium Health when needs arise.
- **Best Practice Sharing** – Sharing of ALL internal education, communications and policy updates – critical for helping affiliates move quickly. We also send our affiliates timely summaries of internal Atrium Health discussions that precede wider communications within Atrium Health. This gives our affiliates a head-start on making similar decisions and crafting communications.

In addition to these ongoing activities and touchpoints, Atrium Health has been very proactive in pushing many specific initiatives and capabilities out directly to our partner organizations over the past several weeks (and will continue in the weeks to come).

**ONGOING INITIATIVES | ACTIVITIES – CURRENTLY INVOLVING NHRMC**

**Supply Chain** (particularly PPE supplies)

The Atrium Health Supply Chain Alliance (AHSCA) has weekly (if not more often) coordinated calls with every affiliate to ensure all supply needs are met across the system. In particular, the AHSCA has been able to ensure all of our affiliates, including NHRMC, have been able to keep adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) in both the acute and ambulatory settings throughout the ongoing COVID-19 situation. In fact, AHSCA was able to share some NHRMC-developed programs around PPE conservation in non-acute spaces, which has benefited our entire enterprise. As we move further into this situation together, Atrium Health and AHSCA will be there as a vital partner with all of our affiliated organizations, including NHRMC, to manage and address supply chain challenges as they arise.
COVID-19 Screening, Testing and Testing Centers

Atrium Health has been leading the way to stand up drive-through Coronavirus Testing Centers, with multiple centers in operation today across the Charlotte region, and we have the ability to stand up more as the need arises. These sites are protecting our healthcare workers and patients, maximizing our PPE supply, while also minimizing locations where patients with flu-like illness show up. In addition, we have worked to develop Emergency Department Screening Centers and protocols at each of our Emergency Departments throughout the Charlotte region. These screening sites are used to triage patients, often before they leave their car, in order to minimize the opportunity for spread of COVID-19. We have partnered with Navicent Health in deploying these initiatives and have opened one drive-through testing center in the Macon, Georgia, market. This expertise and the developed protocols for these testing facilities are fully available to all of our partner organizations, including NHRMC.

One of the most critical capabilities is being able to test patients so that we can better manage and isolate potential COVID-19 exposures. Atrium Health is unique in that we are one of a handful of healthcare systems in the entire nation to have an in-house lab that can handle COVID-19 tests. More importantly, the testing capabilities at Atrium Health allows us to more rapidly turn around tests in a matter of hours – as opposed to days with many other hospitals and private labs. Since March 19, NHRMC has been sending batches of tests to Atrium Health daily for this rapid response testing capability. The ability to receive these results in a matter of hours has been vital in the identification and treatment of patients in the Wilmington region, which ultimately helps to control the spread of the virus.

Virtual Care Capabilities

A critical way in which patients and providers can avoid unneeded direct contact and potential spread of COVID-19 is through the utilization of virtual and e-visit capabilities. Atrium Health, a national leader in the adoption of ambulatory virtual capabilities, began directing lower acuity patient visits to the virtual setting near the onset of the COVID-19 situation in the U.S. We have now begun working with our partners to either provide the direct virtual capacity for their patients or, in some cases, to help them stand up their own virtual capability, utilizing their current provider networks. Atrium Health assisted NHRMC with ensuring the correct coding was being utilized within the EPIC system as NHRMC stood up this capability more broadly in the Wilmington market. Atrium Health is also uniquely skilled at navigating the complexities of providing virtual services across a multi-state footprint and, in particular, managing a primary service area that is multi-state (bridging across North Carolina into South Carolina).

Disaster Response (Patient Transportation and MED-1 Deployment)

As outlined in Atrium Health’s RFP response, Atrium Health’s Disaster Response Team includes two key components that are unmatched in times like the COVID-19 situation. Carolinas MED-1 is our mobile hospital unit that provides full patient care capabilities and beyond. Able to be deployed during natural disasters (like our response during Hurricane Florence) and mass casualty events, this one-of-a-kind mobile hospital has routinely been dispatched to alleviate surge patient volume situations during severe flu seasons (most recently deployed at Grady Health in Atlanta, Georgia). This asset will be made available in North Carolina, as needed, during this situation. In addition, Atrium Health’s MedCenter Air – a fleet of jets, planes, helicopters and ambulances – offers rapid patient transport options for patients across the Carolinas, including those patients in the NHRMC system.

INITIATIVES | ACTIVITIES – IN DEVELOPMENT AND/OR DEPLOYED TO INTEGRATED PARTNERS

Remote Workforce Capabilities

An initial focus of Atrium Health was to identify those non-patient-facing employees who could work remotely, mitigating the risk of spreading COVID-19 among our teammates. Atrium Health was able to rapidly accomplish this within a matter of days and is projecting to have 7,334 (16.3% of our total workforce) of our teammates working from home. Additionally, we continue to work with our partner organizations to identify barriers to remote working (e.g., technology, infrastructure, etc.) while deploying solutions to support this capability for teammates across the Atrium Health enterprise.

Health Bot Technology Deployment

Atrium Health has worked rapidly to deploy the Microsoft Health Bot technology throughout our system as a means to engage our patients, as well as screen for potential infection and needed care. This technology assists in screening patients with cold or flu-like symptoms and determining who has high enough risk factors to need additional levels of care.
and testing. This helps manage potential bottlenecks in the system before they occur. Atrium Health is currently working with both Navicent Health and Wake Forest Baptist Health to go-live with this same Microsoft Health Bot platform and will look to work with additional partner organizations in deploying this technology as we move forward.

**COVID-19 Management and Tracking**

One of the greatest challenges our leaders across Atrium Health and our partner organizations have faced with the COVID-19 situation is the ability to monitor and link critical data, both from a patient diagnosis and flow perspective to a critical supply chain and staff resource information. In an effort to better manage across our system, Atrium Health has rapidly developed and deployed key dashboards and data visualization tools that will enable us to better manage this ongoing situation.

**COVID-19 Dashboards**

These dashboards, which measure activity across six key areas (patients, teammates, ICU, PPE supply, tests, key COVID-19 volumes, and virtual health), will be vital in monitoring ongoing activity and status of key elements of the COVID-19 situation. As we move forward and refine these measures, Atrium Health will begin working with our integrated partner organizations (like Navicent Health) to share and deploy these monitoring capabilities across the system.

**Note:** As an affiliated / managed organization, NHRMC would have access to the knowledge sharing and file specifications utilized to develop this type of integrated dashboard. Full deployment would be available to NHRMC as a more integrated (particularly with the data systems) partner to Atrium Health.
COVID-19 Test Results Mapping Tool

In order to better manage our patient populations and better deploy resources across our market, Atrium Health has developed a time-lapse geospatial mapping application of COVID-19 testing, showing both positive and negative tests across our footprint over time. As we continue to provide testing support for organizations across Atrium Health (including NHRMC),

**COVID – 19 Testing – Through March 20, 2020**

**COVID – 19 Testing – Through April 19, 2020**

*Note:* In addition to this retrospective mapping capability, Atrium Health is also working on predictive analytical models to forecast various epidemiological scenarios and their impacts on hospital utilization (both overall census and, in particular, ICU utilization).

These are examples of the many initiatives Atrium Health is deploying to better manage and deliver care to our patients in this unprecedented time in our country’s history. As we move forward, we look to continue to share and work collaboratively with our many partners across the region. We believe that together, with partners like New Hanover Regional Medical Center, we can continue to lead the way for our communities in these very challenging times.