

COVID-19 Community Innovation Stories, Week of May 18, 2020

In the face of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the country is seeing innovations in communities that highlight the best of human ingenuity. We highlight these stories to show how many are helping those around them, and prompt everyone to think about how they can help others.¹

Volunteer Patriots Program

The University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Volunteer Patriots program connects those with skills in engineering, management, software development, operations management and other backgrounds with UCSF hospitals. The hospitals have asked for support in three main areas: building a staffing schedule for screening; building multilingual COVID-19 education content that can be digitally distributed; and creating a triaging solution for rescheduling patients for elective procedures. The University hopes to expand this network to the rest of California.²

Advanced Patient Isolation Coverings

A multidisciplinary collaboration at Harvard University has led to the creation of a new piece of personal protective equipment (PPE): transparent patient isolation coverings. These shields serve to protect healthcare providers by covering the patient's head and top part of their body and maintaining negative air pressure inside.³

Emergency Operations Center Future Planning for Evacuation

In preparation for the hurricane season, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Galveston, Texas, conducts daily virtual meetings with stakeholders, to include the Chamber of Commerce, school districts, hospitals and universities. The city has updated its list of people registered for the need-a-ride program in the event of a hurricane evacuation and now anticipates a need to double the number of buses available for transport to maintain social distancing during evacuations. The city also works to ensure it has sufficient PPE and thermometers to resource health

¹ This document contains references and links to non-federal resources and organizations. This information is meant solely for informational purposes and is not intended to be an endorsement of any non-federal entity by FEMA, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or the U.S. government.

² <https://www.healthhubsf.org/ucsf-health-hub-launches-ucsf-volunteer-patriots-program>

³ <https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/2020/04/gsd-begins-patient-isolation-hood-pih-design-and-fabrication-alongside-ongoing-ppe-efforts/>



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assessment stations before people are allowed to board a bus to a hurricane shelter. The EOC set up laptop stations to make the EOC more portable for potential future continuity of operations situations.⁴

Hurricane and Flood Preparation

In New Orleans, Louisiana, a nonprofit that normally assists with hurricane evacuations expanded its operations to include stockpiling food and supplies to prepare for a potential hurricane season at a time when the supply level of non-perishables is already low. In Mississippi, a coalition of mayors and other leaders initiated procurement of PPE to distribute during floods.⁵

Online Situational Update Aggregator

In Ontario, Canada, Public Health Ontario has developed an online platform that consolidates COVID-19-related updates in a daily scan of national and international health organization situational updates and guidance for the public to access. The platform also provides resources for professionals who are responding to the pandemic and a regularly updated summary table including research articles relating to the virus. Resources include fact sheets, guidance, best practices, laboratory testing, presentations, reports and research.⁶

Online Forum for Healthcare Worker Communication

An online platform links to Slack discussions connecting hospitals and clinics around the world to share best practices and lessons learned relating to the clinical, operational, and financial aspects of COVID-19. The network lays the foundation for global triage support, improved access to health care services, and clinical research.⁷

Stanford Pet Partners

In collaboration with Stanford Health Care's Professional Animal Workers (PAWS) program, therapy dogs at Stanford Hospital, and Stanford University have moved to online video communication applications such as Zoom and Instagram to continue providing emotional support services for staff and students.⁸

Goodwill Implements Protective Measures

Goodwill stores in North Carolina and South Carolina implemented protective measures for reopening, including quarantining donations for 72 hours after drop-off and placing a greeter in front of stores to disinfect shopping carts and count customers in efforts to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Goodwill stores installed sneeze guards at all registers.⁹

⁴ <https://www.govtech.com/em/safety/-COVID-19-Collides-with-Hurricane-Season-Spawning-Policy-Changes-.html>

⁵ <https://theconversation.com/its-hurricane-preparedness-week-and-communities-arent-ready-for-both-coronavirus-and-a-disaster-137858>

⁶ <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

⁷ <https://covid.snarkhealth.com/>

⁸ <https://www.instagram.com/stanfordpetpartners/>

⁹ <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/coronavirus/article242685946.html>

FEMA's Best Practice Initiative

There are extraordinary efforts nationwide to support personnel and resource needs to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. FEMA is working to highlight these efforts and encourage everyone to think about what they can do to be a part of providing solutions to help. Visit <https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/best-practices> for more information.

Topics for the “Best Practices” series are generated from crowd-sourced suggestions. Have an idea? Let us research it! Organizations and individuals can e-mail best practices or lessons learned to fema-cipsupport@fema.dhs.gov.

For more information on how to help during COVID-19, visit [FEMA's website for information on donations and volunteering](#).

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