

May 1, 2020

AHA and ANA Urge Congress to Provide Additional Support to Hospitals, Health Systems and Front-line Caregivers Responding to COVID-19

The AHA and American Nurses Association today urged Congress to “act quickly to get needed resources into the health care system,” so that hospitals, nurses and physicians responding to COVID-19 are able to continue to provide treatments, front-line health care personnel are able to provide care and patients are able access health care services.

Highlights of the letter are outlined below. Read the full AHA and ANA [letter](#) for complete details.

In addition to the actions outlined in the joint letter, the AHA will be urging Congress to take action on a number of other issues important to hospitals and health systems. See the [AHA list](#) for those items.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AHA AND ANA LETTER TO CONGRESS

The AHA and ANA urged Congress to:

- **Provide additional funding to the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund**, which was enacted to cover expenses for health care providers for preparing and responding to COVID-19 that are otherwise not covered such as increased expenses for personal protective equipment, increased surge capacity, additional health care providers and lost revenue.
- **Establish a separate fund for Health Care Heroes to support essential front-line workers, including nurses and physicians**, both during and after the crisis. Among other areas, Congress should provide funding: to cover the costs of child and dependent care for essential health care employees; to supply housing and transportation vouchers; and for free regular testing of COVID-19.
- **Support access to care** by, among other areas, providing loan forgiveness for accelerated payments; allowing investor-owned hospitals to participate in Federal Emergency Management Agency funding programs without state contracts; lifting the cap on graduate medical education slots; and providing appropriate liability protections to front line medical providers and facilities.

- **Support rural communities** by increasing flexibilities for e-prescribing and telehealth; allowing for new Medicare designations to sustain rural communities; supporting increased funding for broadband access; and allowing critical access hospitals to cost settle after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Support the uninsured** by preserving and building upon private sector coverage by covering the cost of COBRA; increasing eligibility to federal subsidies under the Affordable Care Act; allowing special enrollment in the health insurance marketplaces; and prohibiting finalization of the Medicaid fiscal accountability rule. The groups also urged Congress to allocate new funds, and prohibit taking resources from the funding authorized to the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund, to cover the cost of treatment for the uninsured because the fund was not intended or funded at an appropriate enough level to cover the uninsured.

Further Questions

If you have questions, please contact the AHA at 800-424-4301.