



April 23, 2020

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Dear Washington State Health Care Leaders:

The COVID-19 crisis has presented all of us with great challenges, and I am particularly appreciative of your members' commitment, dedication, and perseverance to providing quality care to Washingtonians throughout this crisis. As front-line workers, your members are every patient's heroes and I appreciate the care, compassion, and encouragement they are providing every day to their patients. I especially value your organization's partnership in combating this pandemic.

I am following up regarding the letter you and other groups sent requesting to extend the Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioner Act to Washington practitioners. I appreciate the work that we have done together to prepare for the possibility that the health care and hospital systems would reach capacity and need to surge staff, space, and supplies. As we all know, the models predicted the system would not be able to accommodate the surge of beds needed for COVID-19 patients. Therefore, the request was made for resources, which resulted in the additional hospital capacity including the Century Link Field Hospital and additional beds in the facility at Astria.

As you point out in your letter, during that time it was our collective expectation that a large number of providers across the state would be practicing health care in unprecedented circumstances, and in ways that would deviate from the prevailing standards of care.



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It has been with cautious optimism that we have watched those system projections change and may have passed the anticipated peak of the COVID-19 hospital surge. I have made decisions to return some of the beds and other resources we requested as we prepared for the surge. In addition, I know many health care workers were pushed near capacity in challenging circumstances, but it has not become a statewide challenge. I am thankful for our current circumstances but continue to be diligent and recognize there are areas of the state that are close to capacity that must be monitored and ready to respond.

My staff are drafting a proclamation in response to your request. I want to be able to have it in place expeditiously, if needed. However, at this time I do not believe current circumstances or projections call for an immediate need for this liability waiver.

My staff would be happy to discuss specific conditions under which we would put the proclamation in place. Our current thinking is that a waiver would be best utilized if the crisis standards of care were deemed necessary to implement. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact my Senior Policy Advisor, Amber Leaders, at Amber.Leaders@gov.wa.gov.

The community commitment to weathering this storm together has been incredible. Thank you again for your ongoing partnership.

Very truly yours,



Jay Inslee
Governor