Your Covid-19 checklist to expand capacity
Shortlist of strategies from Advisory Board members

Boosting capacity has never been more important as hospitals face an impending surge of Covid-19 cases across the coming weeks. As our researchers engage with hospital and health system leaders in Covid-19 hotspots across the country, we’ve assembled an early checklist of table-stakes strategies your organization should implement now to proactively manage patient demand and staff and resource shortages.

Redirect patient demand

1. Postpone all elective procedures

- Delay elective surgeries to free up bed capacity, staff availability, and conserve PPE and other resources.
  - In line with social distancing practices, proactively postponing elective procedures will minimize the risk of transmission of Covid-19 between patients and providers.
  - Though delays will cause revenue loss in the short-term, it is seen as a no-regrets move to proactively conserve resources in anticipation of a surge of Covid-19 cases.
  - Consult this list for full details of state guidance on elective surgeries.

> Advisory Board resource: Canceling elective surgeries? These 5 factors can help you estimate the revenue loss.

Repurpose beds for additional ICU capacity

- Repurpose surgical beds (e.g., PACUs, ORs, ASCs) for additional ICU capacity.
- Set protocol for isolating different patient populations, including non-Covid patients, persons under investigation (PUIs), and patients who test positive for Covid-19 in your facilities.
- Transition a subset of essential, non-Covid inpatient services to ASCs (e.g., surgeries typically performed in hospital, labor and delivery).

Ramp up telehealth capabilities

- Shift existing non-Covid appointments to telehealth visits where possible.
- Proactively suggest virtual visits for patients with existing medical conditions. For patients with chronic illnesses, assess capacity for remote patient monitoring.
- Stand up a phone triage line or chatbot for patients who suspect they are ill. Direct patients who present with symptoms to a virtual visit for further consultation before scheduling an in-person visit.
- Develop standard guidelines for staff who are triaging patients that communicate clear referral pathways.

> Advisory Board resource: 3 ways to ramp up telehealth to deal with Covid-19

3 imperatives to leverage telehealth against Covid-19
Your Covid-19 checklist to boost capacity (cont.)
Shortlist of strategies from Advisory Board members

Redirect patient demand (cont.)

**Brainstorm alternative sites of care**

- Create criteria for places that can be repurposed as sites of care for Covid-19 patients, including proximate hotels, dorm beds, or gyms.
- Partner with post-acute sites of care, including LTACHs, for additional bed space.
- Plan your organization’s approach to staffing alternative sites.

**Re-envision discharge planning**

- Collaborate with area home health agencies and home-based support services to discharge more patients directly home, faster.
- Use 1135 waivers to accelerate more acute patient discharges to post-acute facilities, starting with non-Covid patients.
Your Covid-19 checklist to expand capacity (cont.)
Shortlist of strategies from Advisory Board members

2 Redeploy staff

Redeploy all available MDs across medical units

- Reallocate providers, especially surgeons and anesthesiologists no longer performing procedures, to serve in acute care settings.
- Flex providers working in outpatient sites of care to work in acute settings as non-Covid care moves from in-person to virtual options.

Upskill RNs to work in ICU

- Create a contingency plan for quickly getting RNs up to speed on acute care for Covid-19 patients.
- Tap other members of the care team to backfill RN roles in non-acute settings.
- Move any non-clinical staff at your organization who have clinical backgrounds into care roles.

Source childcare for clinical staff to reduce no-shows

- Organize small group or individual childcare for staff to align with social distancing recommendations.

Ready your list of licensed clinical retirees and medical/nursing students to join the workforce

- Determine how you will leverage your state’s expedited license renewals and temporary emergency licenses to expand workforce capacity.
Your Covid-19 checklist to expand capacity (cont.)
Shortlist of strategies from Advisory Board members

3 Locate all available supplies

Source PPE donations

☐ Publicize a list of the supplies your organization needs through press releases, social media, and other broad channels, along with contact information for how to donate.

☐ Reach out to the list of community businesses below to source PPE by donation:
  • Construction companies
  • Woodworking, painting, industrial coating companies
  • Welding suppliers
  • Marine suppliers
  • General industrial suppliers (such as Granger, Fastenal)
  • Automotive stores
  • Heavy equipment, worksite machinery rental companies (such as United Rentals)
  • Cleaning companies (especially fire, water and mold restoration franchises)
  • Agriculture companies

Reuse and create PPE substitutions to fill supply chain gaps

☐ In crisis situations, extend the life of FDA-approved PPE using sanitation techniques like UVGI, vaporous hydrogen peroxide, and moist heat.

☐ Though the CDC only recommends them as a last resort, consider using homemade fabric masks and face shields made from repurposed supplies when other options are unavailable.

► Advisory Board resources: How US hospitals are approaching a PPE shortage
  Cheat Sheet: Strategies to Optimize PPE & Equipment

Access all available ventilators

☐ When facing shortages, follow FDA guidance that suggests use of supplemental alternative devices capable of delivering breaths including home or emergency transport ventilators, anesthesia gas machines, and sleep apnea machines.

☐ Consider extending use of ventilators past their shelf life, depending on availability.

☐ Identify alternatives to ventilators already on the market, including helmet ventilators and portable, non-invasive ventilators.