

Pediatric respiratory virus surge resources for all providers

Date: December 20, 2022

Situation

With the ongoing patient surge due to respiratory illness placing strain on Utah's hospitals, this communication highlights resources available for patient transfer and placement, recommendations for pediatric triage and care coordination, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) waivers, clinical staffing resources, equipment and supply resource requests, and mental health resources.

Patient transfer assistance

The Utah Medical Command Response Team (MCRT) originated in 2020 to assist Utah with patient load leveling and bed placement across hospital systems. This resource can be leveraged to mitigate the current pediatric surge by assisting in finding appropriate beds for patients who require transfer. Please contact Jordan Sorenson at (801) 368-6487 or jordan@utahhospitals.org for further information or emergent requests. Specific transfer centers for hospital systems in Utah can also be contacted at:

- HCA Mountainstar: (866) 296-9337
- Intermountain Health: (855) 932-3648
- University of Utah Health: (801) 587-8980

Pediatric triage and care recommendations

- Review facility and/or healthcare coalition plans to address pediatric surge
 - These plans should include how to manage adult-sized children who have conditions common to both children and adults (e.g., appendicitis, trauma, sepsis) on adult medical/surgical units within federal and [state](#) regulations
- Consider expansion of staffing and bed capacity through program flexibilities, team nursing models, and double bunking
- Assess inventories of medicines and supplies and maintain awareness of supply chain and any shortages for durable medical equipment (e.g., pediatric respiratory support supplies, ventilators, PPE) and medicines (e.g., antibiotics, antipyretics, inhaled beta-2 agonists, oseltamivir, anti-inflammatories)

- Consider Hospital Incident Command Center activation to manage pediatric surge as needed
- Utilize facility telehealth platforms to connect with pediatric specialists
- Review additional resources to assist with hospital pediatric readiness (see below)

National hospital pediatric triage and care resources:

- [Pediatric RSV Surge Resources for EMS / Prehospital](#)
- [Pediatric Surge Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Just in Time Handbook: A Quick Pediatric Reference Guide for Adult Healthcare Providers](#)
- [ASPR TRACIE Tip Sheet: Improving Hospital Pediatric Surge](#)
- [Health and Human Services Pediatric Surge Resources](#)
- [EMSC Telehealth Toolkit](#)

CMS waivers

The CMS authorized [blanket waivers](#) for COVID-19 that may provide some relief for the current pediatric respiratory virus surge. Waived requirements addressing hospital operations include:

- Emergency departments may screen or triage patients off-site
- Telemedicine may be more readily used for patient care, including accessing pediatric specialty care
- Time frames have been extended for completing medical records, authentication of verbal orders, and providing copies of medical records
- Bed capacity can be increased by using temporary expansion sites for patient care, if approved by the state
- Patients may be more easily transferred between facilities
- Physicians and other practitioners may be more readily available due to lessening restrictions, such as:
 - Flexibilities in expired clinical licensures
 - Flexibilities in hospital credentialing and privileging process
 - Patients do not necessarily need to be under the care of a physician during hospitalization to maximize use of other qualified practitioners
 - Ability to render services outside of state of licensure and CMS enrollment
- Flexibilities in documentation requirements for a nursing care plan for each patient to allow increased time to meet clinical care needs

Clinical staffing support resources

Many of the staffing support options available in Utah during the COVID-19 pandemic can be utilized for the current pediatric respiratory virus surge, listed [here](#). These include:

- Temporary respiratory care student apprenticeships
- Nurse core competency training availability
- Workforce recruitment in collaboration with [Department of Workforce Services](#)
- [Nurse Licensure Compact](#) (NLC) to allow out of state nurses to work in Utah if licensed in another NLC state
- Licensed LPN in good standing may work as a “practitioner” per [Utah Code](#)
- [Telehealth resources](#), including reimbursement and platforms available
- [Respiratory Treatment Exemptions Administrative Order](#)
- [Utah’s Medical Reserve Corps](#) (please reach out to your local health department)

Medical equipment/supply resources

For resource requests, first reach out to the healthcare coalition in your area, noted in the table below. Local health departments and DHHS have caches of medications and other supplies that may be of use if your facility is experiencing a surge in patients. For example, some local caches have Tamiflu from the 2009 pandemic that have an FDA-approved extension for use, and DHHS has a small cache of Amoxicillin Oral Suspension 125mg/5ml (150ml). Healthcare coalition coordinators who are unable to fulfill a request can send the request to the Utah Department of Health and Human Services Public Health and Healthcare Preparedness and Response operations and logistics coordinator Bryan Larsen. For limited resources, requests may require coordination with federal partners.

Healthcare coalition	Coordinator	Phone	Email
Central Utah	Kyle Hunt	435.896.5451 ext. 340	huntkyle@utah.gov
Northern Utah	Justin Brown	435.695.2062	jbrown@brhd.org
Salt Lake, Summit, & Tooele	Steve Beach	385.468.4126	sbeach@slco.org
Southeast	Eric Anderson	435.636.1159	ewanderson@utah.gov
Southwest	Austin Smith	435.986.2589	asmith@swuhealth.org

Uintah Basin	Rob Grove	435.247.1170	rgrove@tricountyhealth.com
Utah/Wasatch	Kylaas Flanagan	801.960.2705	kylasf@utahcounty.gov

Mental health resources

A helpful collection of available Utah-based mental health resources can be found at <https://liveonutah.org/resources/crisis-and-treatment-2>. Many of these resources are available to patients and families, as well as healthcare and frontline staff.

- SafeUT Frontline <https://safeut.org/frontline>—833-372-3335
- IHC Emotional Support Line (available to non-employees)—833-442-2211
- Warm Line (peer support)—833-SPEAKUT (833-773-2588) or 801-587-1055
- Utah Crisis Line (referrals for well-being)—800-273-TALK
- Suicide & Crisis Lifeline—988
- Utah Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) <https://www.utcism.org/>
- Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOT)—988

Nationally-recognized online resources for staff include the following:

- [Emergency Responder Self-Care Plan](#) (checklist), Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response (ASPR)
- [How Long Has Your “Check Engine Light” Been On?](#) (video), ASPR Emergency Management & Medical Operations (EMMO)

**Thank you for your efforts to provide care and support to Utah’s most vulnerable.
Utah Department of Health and Human Services
and the Utah Hospital Association**