

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

# COVID-19 CHA Update



## COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Update, April 14, 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is a challenging time yet our community is connecting and supporting in heartwarming ways - we are so very grateful to have your partnership! I am writing to share a brief update on CHA's efforts to protect and best serve our patients, visitors, staff and community. Please know that our staff, the heart and soul of CHA's efforts, continue to work day and night to respond to COVID-19 and the needs of the community. One major milestone for CHA is that in the last four weeks staff and providers have launched a robust TeleHealth system for our patients. [TeleHealth](#) is a virtual interaction between patient and provider which helps keep our patients and providers safer. It's a tremendous accomplishment!

Staff at CHA are redeploying and taking on new clinical roles each day. We are shifting resources and services (as you will see below) as we respond to this unprecedented moment. As our CEO, Dr. Assaad Sayah, said to the CHA community recently, " Every generation is faced with a defining moment, a challenge that seems overwhelming and difficult to bear. Together we can overcome our fear and discomfort to save others - especially the most vulnerable members of our communities. "

Many of you have asked if we still plan to close the Somerville Hospital Emergency Department and open our new Urgent Care Center on April 30. We remain on schedule for the conversion. At this moment, and in the wake of countless changes to our service delivery systems, we believe that continuing to shift our resources to critical areas and be flexible is in the best interest of our patients and communities. The Somerville ED is still, even in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, seeing low patient volumes, particularly overnight. This is not the case, however, at Everett and Cambridge Hospitals where there have been significant increases in patient volume. We will continue to serve patients at Somerville Urgent Care between the hours of 9 am - 9 pm

It is true that difficult times often bring out the best in people, and we are seeing this not only with our staff but also with you, our amazing neighbors and communities. Over the past few weeks you have encouraged us at our hospitals with evening applause, even a wonderful sign thanking staff, helping us fundraise for crucial support, and providing us with donated meals and personal protective equipment. Your love and dedication are truly helping us bring "Care to the People" in circumstances that none of us could ever have imagined. As CHA continues to adapt to the changing environment, please [visit our website](#) for the most updated information and also to find key updates on our services and response to COVID-19 below.

### Accessing CHA Primary Care

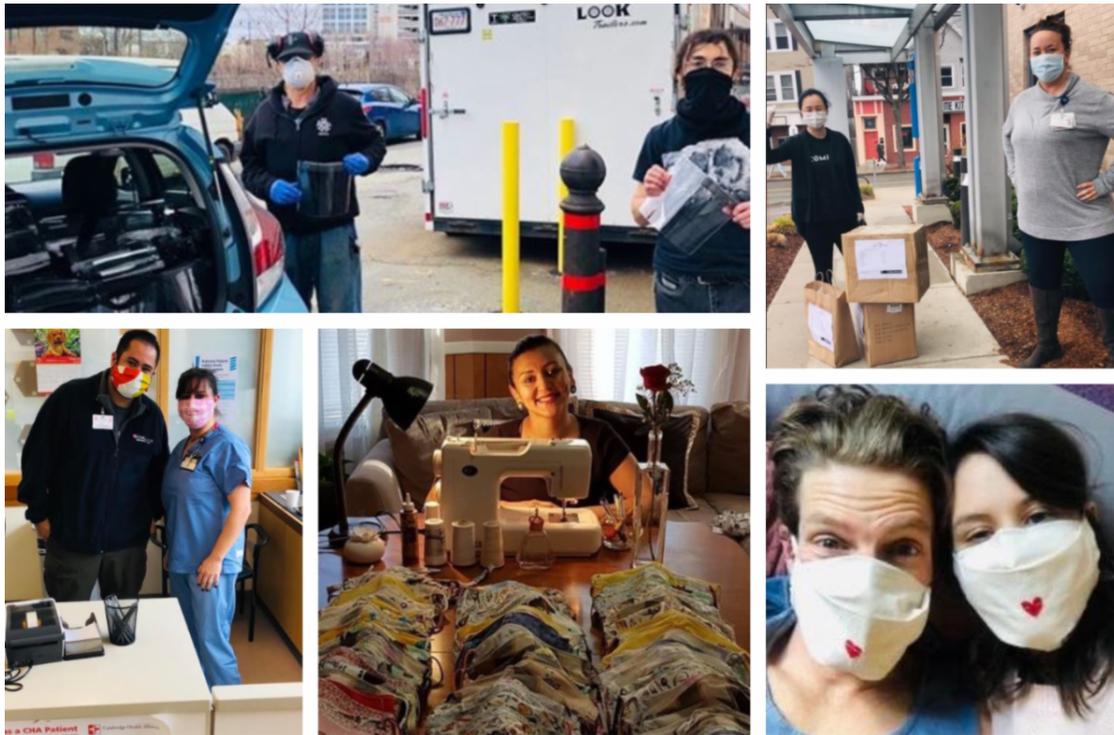
In order to keep our patients and staff safe, most visits are now by TeleHealth - phone or video - except for a few services that require in-person care. Limited in-person visits are

available as needed. [Visit our TeleHealth page to learn more](#) .

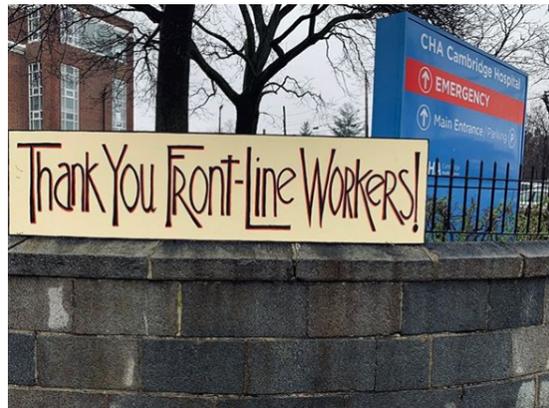
### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Donations

Like all healthcare organizations, CHA is facing shortages of medical supplies. Our community is stepping up to the challenge and has been delivering! From our neighbors (far and wide) to local businesses, community groups, and individuals - we have been deeply moved by your support.

We are still asking the community for donations of new and unused PPE. There remains a need for N95 and surgical masks, coveralls, and paper protective gowns. We are so thankful for all the homemade masks we have received, and we continue to distribute internally at CHA. We are still happy to receive homemade masks and distribute as well to our community partners and city officials who are in need of these masks. [Visit our website](#) to see the full list of items. Our heartfelt thanks for all your kindness and the incredible support! Be safe, take care of yourself and continue all the care you are demonstrating to one another.



*Pictured are protective masks and shields created or donated by Chad Bennett of Dark Monk, The Jing Team - Compass, Aline Cavalcante, the Boston Area Mask Initiative, and the Winston Family of Winston Flowers.*



**Everett Police Chief Steve Mazzie** stopped by CHA Everett Hospital to deliver thanks and treats for our staff and providers. He is pictured with **Christian Lanphere** (left), the hospital's site administrator, and **Melisa Lai-Becker, MD**, site chief of emergency medicine. Photo on right - neighbors displayed outside of CHA Cambridge Hospital thanking our staff and providers.

**Visitor Policy** - Visitors are restricted at the inpatient units and emergency departments at CHA Cambridge and Everett Hospitals. No visitors are allowed for patients at CHA Everett Hospital, and visitors at CHA Cambridge Hospital are only allowed in [limited situations](#).

- At CHA Everett Hospital, no Emergency or Inpatient visitors are allowed.
- At CHA Cambridge Hospital, no Emergency visitors. Inpatient visitors are allowed only for children and women about to have a baby. [Learn more about this policy here.](#)

### Collaborations on Community and Government Resources

[Tufts University](#) will soon make its residence halls available to house medical personnel, first responders, and CHA patients, including those recovering from COVID-19, in an effort to help contain the spread. This service is a partnership between Tufts, CHA, and the cities of Somerville and Medford. An enormous thank you to Tufts University President Dr. Anthony Monaco for his leadership on this project and commitment to our patients and communities.

### Call to Action: Foreign-Trained Healthcare Workers

The community and government officials are advocating to let health care professionals, trained in other countries, assist with the response to COVID-19. [CommonWealth](#), a local public affairs magazine, interviewed CHA's Chief of Medicine Rick Pels, MD, for a story on the potential deployment of foreign-trained medical professionals to assist during this pandemic.

### CHA Revere Mobile Market: Open & Busier Than Ever!

On April 6, CHA, the Greater Boston Food Bank and Good Measures hosted another Mobile Market in Revere with fresh produce for the community. Social distancing was practiced and participants were asked to stand six feet apart. Bags of food were packed ahead of time.



*Pictured are staff and volunteers at the Revere Mobile Market.*

### Other Supports

[CHA Connect](#) is a website that lists free and reduced-cost programs for housing, food support, job training and much more. Visit [CHA Connect](#) and enter a ZIP code. People can search by category or keyword.



### How to Make a Donation to CHA

It has been heartwarming to receive so many inquiries from people asking how they can support Cambridge Health Alliance as we battle COVID-19. We hope that you, your families and work colleagues are healthy and well. At this time, it is critical we centralize all these efforts to best manage our resources. If you (or your friends or family) are interested in making a general online financial contribution to CHA, we ask you to make a [donation to the CHA Foundation](#).

### To mail a check to the CHA Foundation:

CHA Foundation  
Somerville Hospital  
230 Highland Ave., 5th Floor  
Somerville, MA 02143

- For any questions about making a donation, please email David Sternburg, our Director of Development at, [dsternburg@challiance.org](mailto:dsternburg@challiance.org)
- For PPE donations, please email Julia Saggese at [jsaggese@challiance.org](mailto:jsaggese@challiance.org)
- **For restaurants interested in feeding our dedicated staff, email [fooddonation@challiance.org](mailto:fooddonation@challiance.org) or Yvonne Johnson.**

Warm regards,



**Mary Cassesso**  
Chief Community Officer  
Cambridge Health Alliance



Stay Connected:

