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## CHA COVID-19 Community Update

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

CHA is working hard to address many obstacles during the outbreak of COVID-19 and rising to the occasion for our communities, patients and one another. Each day providers and staff work extra shifts, push themselves beyond their comfort zones and take care of patients with compassion. I am proud to be part of CHA and to work with such a dedicated team of heroes. I hope you will enjoy our [Thank You to Our Heroes](#) page on the CHA website. It shares stories and pictures from the front line and gives people a chance to submit a thank you note to a CHA provider or employee.

CHA nurses **Casey Alexandre**, **Ginny Caples**, **Joanne Cassell**, **Jennah Epstein-Santoyo** and **Lisa Mashburn** were nominated for this year's edition of the *Boston Globe*'s [Salute to Nurses](#). Ginny, an infection prevention nurse who has played a key role in our COVID-19 response, was also one of four nurses highlighted in a [cover story](#) titled "Nowhere They'd Rather Be: The Narratives of Four Nurses."

Most recently, in conjunction with the [Cambridge Jazz Foundation](#) and working with Cambridge Jazz Festival co-founder and former Cambridge City Councillor Larry Ward, CHA staff and providers were honored with a [special musical tribute video](#). I hope you enjoy it! In addition, Clara Wainwright, a fabric artist and quilter known as the founder of First Night Boston, created six large quilted heart collages for CHA to display in the windows of all three campuses. Both Larry and Clara helped us celebrate Hospital Week 2020 by showing the important role of art in healing.

In the community, we continue to focus on food security with support from CHA CEO **Assaad Sayah**, MD, and CHA Primary Care. In the past several weeks, we have sourced hundreds of jars of Teddie's peanut butter for our food program, secured nutritious food from the Greater Boston Food Bank with a partnership between Malden Bread of Life with the help of Gentle Giant, and reached a milestone at our Revere Mobile Market, feeding more than 700 families in one day. We also partnered with the City of Revere, Massachusetts Restaurants United, and chefs Jody Adams and Ming Tsai to organize a food truck pop-up with free meals for the community.

Support and donations from the community, such as surgical and homemade masks, meals for our frontline staff, parades of support and notes of gratitude have made all the difference. We are deeply grateful for the continued assistance from friends near and far. I

am awed by the way the community has come together during this time and am so thankful to all of you! Please see below for key service updates and other important resources.



*A selection of photos showing some of the amazing donations and acts of support CHA has received.*

## COVID-19 Community Testing

As a part of our commitment to public health, CHA has expanded COVID-19 testing and now has three sites where people can get tested:

- **CHA East Cambridge Care Center** (163 Gore St, Cambridge) - For people who live in Cambridge.
- **CHA Malden Care Center** (195 Canal Street, Malden) - For people who live in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Revere and Winthrop
- **CHA Somerville Campus** (33 Tower Street, Somerville) - For people who live in Somerville.

Expanded testing is an important step in our regional response to COVID-19. All residents in these communities over age eight, with or without symptoms, can be tested regardless of insurance or immigration status. Testing is by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 617-665-2928.

CHA patients with symptoms should call their primary care provider to schedule their test. They can also book an appointment through [MyChart, the CHA patient portal](#).

Results are available in five days after people are tested. CHA patients will be able to access their test results via MyChart, and will be contacted by their primary care team.

Community members will be notified by their local Public Health Department. Visit CHA's [Patient Help Center](#) to learn more or contact your local Public Health Department.

### Remdesivir

Recently, we received a distribution of the advanced treatment Remdesivir. CHA will be educating staff and dispensing the drug where needed. Thanks to the Mass. DPH, collaborating hospitals, **U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey** and **Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley** for working so hard to make sure the drug reaches communities most in need.

### CHA Somerville Urgent Care

The opening and transition of the Somerville Emergency Department to [CHA Somerville Urgent Care](#) occurred on April 30. The new service, which allows walk-ins for minor breaks, intravenous medications and dehydration care along with everything else you would find in primary care, adds a layer of care that is needed in this new environment. Walk-in capacity is extremely valuable right now since it allows CHA to provide in-person care for patients when many of our ambulatory services are being provided remotely.

With the launch of the new CHA Somerville Urgent Care, Somerville Hospital became the **CHA Somerville Campus** to reflect the services offered. CHA Somerville Urgent Care is open 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., seven days a week. COVID-19 patients are asked to contact their primary care provider as Urgent Care is not a testing site.

### Respiratory Clinic

Patients at CHA's new Respiratory Clinic at the Broadway Care Center in Somerville are getting timely care for COVID-19. CHA converted the center into a dedicated respiratory clinic as part of its response to the pandemic. The team helps patients manage their illness during clinic visits, handles follow up calls and offers other community support. A referral is necessary -- **no walk-ins are accepted**.

### Accessing Telehealth Services

Primary Care has completely changed in order to provide telehealth services for the approximately 124,000 patients at CHA. Together with our patients we have navigated remote visits and devised a way to see those who require face-to-face visits, and set up several services to care for patients who have COVID-19. Televisits average around 800 patient encounters each day. The speed of this transition is a testimony to their dedication, flexibility, creativity and resilience. Televisits are also being offered for Psychiatry patients with the same tremendous success -- approximately 90% of the visits are being done virtually.

### Community Outreach Education

Through CHA's CommunityConnects Program, our Community Health Improvement (CHI) team provides health education to community groups. Since COVID-19, they continue to do community outreach and education and have facilitated virtual conferences, including sessions with **Kirsten Meisinger**, MD, and **Jamila Xible** (over 5,000 views) responding to COVID-19 questions among the Brazilian community. They also held a mindfulness session with staff member Farah Samawi and the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center. In addition, CHA Staff and providers have spoken with Nossa Radio and **Christian Lanphere**, CHA Safety Officer and Emergency Management Director, participated in **Malden Mayor Christenson's** TV show about COVID-19. If you would like to participate in these community education efforts or are interested in collaborating, contact **Jamila Xible** at [jxible@challiance.org](mailto:jxible@challiance.org).

### American Red Cross in Need of COVID-19 Plasma

People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 are being asked to consider donating plasma. Blood plasma from those who have recovered may contain antibodies that can help those people that are currently seriously ill with the disease.

If you have recovered from COVID-19, have had no symptoms for 14 days or more and are interested in donating plasma, please visit [redcrossblood.org/plasma4covid](https://redcrossblood.org/plasma4covid) for more information and completed the COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Eligibility Form. If you know someone who has fully recovered from COVID-19 and might be interested in donating plasma, please pass on this information.

### Thank You to Our Community Supporters

We cannot thank our communities and partners enough for all the donations and support that we have received. People have come together in profound ways to deliver critical PPE and meals to our staff and community members as well as generous fiscal donations. Now more than ever, we need to support one another and join efforts to care for our patients, staff and communities. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in our area, CHA has received **136,500 donations** of PPE from around Massachusetts and globe! From homemade and N95 masks, face shields, coveralls, Tyvek suits, to gloves, goggles, ponchos and blankets -- thank you! You are the fuel that is keeping our engine going and we could not be in this fight without you.



*Pictured is a sampling of the PPE and general donations received over the past month.*

### How to Make a Donation to CHA

For people interested in making a general online financial contribution to CHA, please make a [donation to the CHA Foundation](#). Information on how to mail a check is included on the website too.

Contact **David Sternburg** at [dsternburg@challiance.org](mailto:dsternburg@challiance.org) with any questions about donations to CHA.

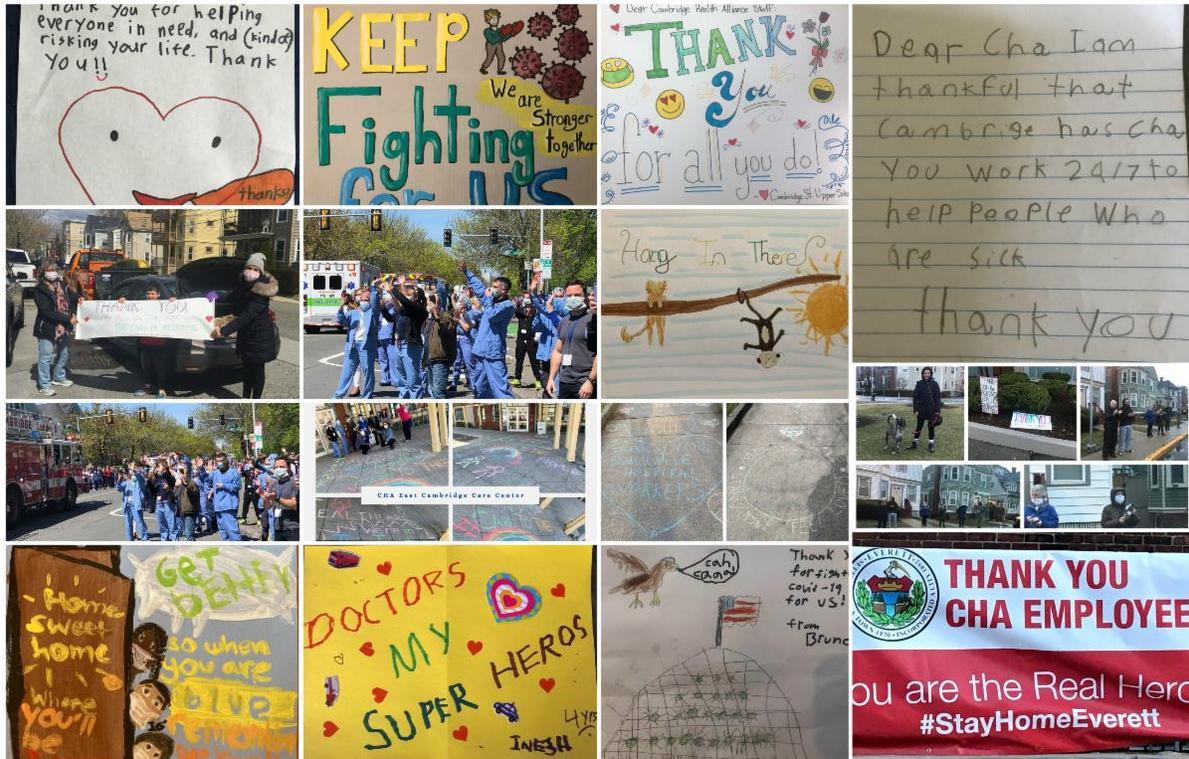
For PPE donations, email [supplychain@challiance.org](mailto:supplychain@challiance.org) or **Julia Saggese** [jsaggese@challiance.org](mailto:jsaggese@challiance.org). Restaurants interested in feeding our staff can email [fooddonation@challiance.org](mailto:fooddonation@challiance.org).

Warm regards,



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

*Pictured below are some of the cards, signs, and words of encouragement we have been receiving from the community. Our deepest thanks!*



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Become a Patient | [challiance.org](http://challiance.org) | 617-665-1000