

A Message From

**Greg A. Adams**

Chairman and CEO, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc. and Hospitals

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rapidly evolve, the situation has become more difficult and challenging for all of us, especially those on the front line of care delivery. I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation to everyone working across the enterprise, including our nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists, lab and radiology technicians, and all the other members of our support teams for providing extraordinary care to our patients and members, and for supporting one another.

It is not easy, and yet, together we are providing exceptional care and demonstrating the amazing expertise of our clinical teams in response to one of the most significant crises of our time. I recently had the opportunity to see this firsthand when I visited our Santa Clara Medical Center, located in the epicenter of an outbreak in California. I witnessed an entire medical center operating as a team, with a single purpose of providing high-quality, evidence-based care in a rapidly evolving situation. I'm certain the commitment, innovation, and resolve I witnessed is in place across Kaiser Permanente, especially in other areas of large outbreaks, and to each of you I say, "thank you."

I want you to know that today and in the coming days as we see more COVID-19 patients in our medical centers and communities, we will stay focused on 2 primary issues: the care we provide to our patients **and** the safety and well-being of our front-line staff.

As we deliver care and treatment to our patients during this outbreak, we must provide the best evidence-based care possible. While speaking to our physicians, nurses, and others, I realized that we are part of a larger community of researchers, scientists, and clinicians who are learning, innovating, and creating evidence-based practice that will benefit COVID-19 patients within Kaiser Permanente and the broader community.

Everyone is working extremely hard and putting in long hours. However, during this time of uncertainty and stress, self-care is important. I encourage you to take care of yourself and your family, rest during downtime, and seek the services of the employee assistance program, if needed.

We are constantly learning more about COVID-19 as this pandemic evolves. Based on some approaches used internationally, the general use of masks in the health care setting may contribute to stopping the spread of coronavirus. In the United States, there is a national shortage of masks which will become worse as the number of COVID-19 cases increase.

With the support of our supply teams and you, we have increased our supply of personal protective equipment, and in particular, masks. Through diligent conservation efforts and procuring more masks, we have stabilized the number of days' worth of supply we have on hand

so we can be safe now and into the future. We are heartened by the outpouring of support from our communities who also want to help this effort to provide more PPE. I want to acknowledge SEIU-UHW President Dave Regan and Enterprise Shared Services and supply chain leader Laurel Junk, along with her team, for working long hours to obtain the needed supplies and PPE equipment.

Through innovative efforts we are also making face shields. A special thanks to Motz Feinberg in our Buy to Pay organization and our engineers for making this possible. Furthermore, our Office of Transformation, led by Jodie Lesh, is working with small businesses in the garment industry to begin making masks for the organization.

The changes we are making regarding masks are as follows:

- We will continue to use enhanced droplet precautions for the care of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Staff members working with these patients or in units with COVID-19 patients will wear a respiratory/surgical mask.
- For patients undergoing high-risk procedures for aerosolization of the coronavirus such as intubation, extubation, bronchoscopy and nebulizer treatments we will continue the use of airborne precautions in addition to the face shield/goggles, gowns, and gloves. Staff members participating or assisting in these procedures are required to wear N95 respirators.
- In clinical areas where staff are caring for non-COVID-19 or patients who are identified as persons under investigation, we will make masks available as soon as we have additional capacity beyond what is needed for our staff and clinicians providing direct care to COVID-19 and PUI patients. Should they choose, clinicians and staff may use masks, brought from home, in their work setting.
- In nonclinical areas and areas where staff has patient and member-facing encounters, staff members may use their personal masks, should they choose. As we build our capacity and are confident that we have sufficient masks for staff in clinical care, we will make additional masks available to staff working in these areas.

In addition to our focus on masks, we're also securing scrubs for those clinicians and staff providing direct care to our COVID-19 or PUI patients. To date we've secured over 400,000 scrubs with a goal of procuring one million. Clinicians and staff providing direct care to our COVID-19 or PUI patients can change into their Kaiser Permanente-provided scrubs prior to the start of their shift and remove them at the end of the shift and prior to going home. The new inventory of scrubs and laundry service begins this week and will reach all markets soon.

I extend my thanks to each of you for what you are doing every day to ensure we live the mission of Kaiser Permanente. I'd also like to acknowledge our labor partners for leaning in to support us during this most difficult time. As we prepare for the duration of this pandemic, we will stay focused on what we need to do to make sure you are safe and provide the right and most effective care to our patients. We are in this together and we are going to get through this, together.