

April 6, 2020

Director Amy Acton
Ohio Department of Health
246 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Director Acton:

Last week, by your order to require inventory of all ventilators in Ohio, healthcare providers across the state of Ohio began reporting inventory of ventilators and other respiratory equipment to the Ohio Department of Health including:

1. Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines
2. Bilevel positive airway pressure (BiPAP) machines
3. Bag valve masks
4. Anesthetic machines
5. Medical ventilators
6. Nasal cannulas
7. Laryngeal mask airway (LMA) devices
8. Endotracheal tubes; and, finally
9. Tracheostomy tubes, trach tubes or tracheal tubes.

We commend you for taking this proactive step in gathering information about existing equipment that could be quickly redistributed from healthcare facilities that are currently closed, such as certain ambulatory surgical centers, for example, to the frontlines where it can prove lifesaving.

Only a small minority of nursing homes in Ohio provide care to ventilator-dependent individuals, but many have other items on hand to care for the individuals who reside within the homes. For example, individuals with a tracheostomy need a spare trach tube at the facility that can be accessed quickly in case of an emergent situation with their tube occluding.

In most cases, any equipment held in a nursing home's inventory is already committed to the care of the individuals who reside in the facility. It is part of the custodial responsibility of the home and indeed, an expression of the commitment we make to the vulnerable individuals in our care.

If and when Ohio reaches a point in the surge where essential respiratory equipment must be redistributed, we implore you to allow nursing homes discretion in maintaining inventory already committed to their residents.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request, and please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Respectfully,



Thomas Lehner, MD, CMD
Board President, Ohio Medical Directors Association



Kathryn L. Brod
President/CEO, LeadingAge Ohio



Pete Van Runkle
President/CEO, Ohio Health Care Association



Chris Murray
President/CEO, Academy for Senior Health Sciences