

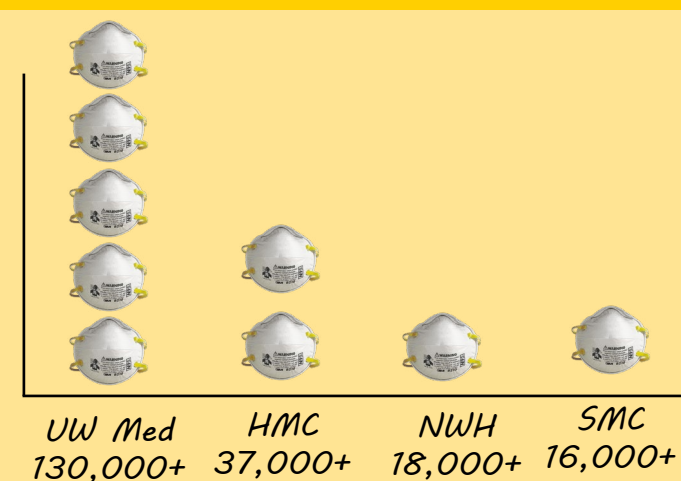


# UW Medicine: Stop Putting Us at Risk!

We are demanding UW Medicine prioritize our safety and stop putting us at risk. UW Medicine is sitting on over 130,000 N95 masks, yet many of us can't access the PPE we need to stay safe. At the same time, UW administrators have acknowledged we have a staffing crisis and they are choosing not to take steps that will actually address our chronic short staffing. It is unacceptable we keep working short without CDC-recommended PPE.

## Release our PPE to keep us safe

The CDC recommends the use of N95s with a face shield or a PAPR when caring for COVID positive and COVID-suspected patients when supplies are available. UW is reporting significantly higher N95 reserves than area health systems like Swedish, who ensure everyone who wants an N95 can get one. Our state also has a stockpile of 38 million N95s that could be accessed if a health system ran low on masks. Why is UW refusing CDC guideline instead of prioritizing our safety?



UW Medicine N95 Stockpile – 160,000+

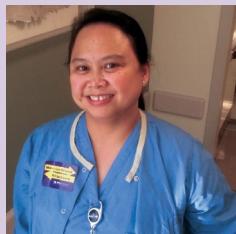
Harborview Medical Center N95 Stockpile – 37,000+

Northwest Hospital – 18,000+

Swedish Medical Center (5 Campuses) N95 Stockpile – 16,000+

\*as reported to WA DOH on 11/25/2020

\*All Swedish Medical Center members are able to access an N95 anytime



“Management acknowledges the critical healthcare staff shortage throughout HMC and UW system. Yet, management continues to refuse to release N95 masks to protect and keep the existing staff members safe. I have been exposed and contracted COVID-19 from my patient’s roommate back in April. With the N95 masks in the Charge RN’s hand and

COVID-19 Director present, my colleagues and I were refused a N95 mask despite our concerns of exposure while waiting for rule out of the PUI. We were told that the person tested negative on admit and nebulizer treatment does not pose a risk for contracting COVID-19.

On the same day, the patient tested positive despite their initial negative result on admit and I contracted COVID-19. I am still suffering residual symptoms and not able to return to work on the floor. Now it’s December, it is so disheartening and appalling for administration and management to withhold CDC recommended N95 masks from HMC and UW healthcare workers due to fear of shortage in a SURGE. No one else should have to go through what I have experienced over the last eight months. The SURGE is NOW. Where are the N95s? Protect and keep your staff safe, release the N95s to healthcare workers in the ED taking care of COVID-19 and PUI patients, and any workers who do not feel safe working without it. Safe staffing and N95 masks, now!” **Melanie Arciaga, HMC, 5E, RN, Executive Board Member**



“We started off at the COVID testing site with N95s, but a couple months into the pandemic, we were told they were not necessary even though when we swab patients they sometimes cough in our faces underneath our face shield. In August when the smoke from the wildfires was really dense, we were all working outside in our regular masks and short staffed. Our chests were hurting because of the smoke. We asked for N95s multiple times and finally they gave us a box of them, which we had to reuse. But we weren’t fit tested for them, so they weren’t working properly, and they refused to fit test us. Now that I know how many N95s US has on hand, I’m disgusted by the fact that they haven’t let us use them the entire time. They need to release the N95s NOW and prioritize our safety.”

**Jessica Reynoso, Swabber, Medical Assistant, NWH COVID-19 Test Site**



“With the ever increasing number of COVID-19 cases and the number of patients that we have to rule out it is, more than ever, imperative that we get the PPE we need. We are demanding that the University of Washington Administration release the N95s so we can all be safe while caring for our patients.” **Drew Price, HMC, Radiology/CT**

## Our Swedish Medical Center union colleagues have won N95 masks for anyone who requests one



“At Swedish we have been able to make sure all of us have the PPE that we need. This is important so we can prevent the spread of infection to our families and our community. We have won universal masking for all staff and visitors into Swedish and ensuring that all of us have been fit tested for N95s that we can all access in all COVID areas. Whether you’re a nurse or environmental services, our community depends on us staying healthy and protecting ourselves so that we can continue to give quality care during this pandemic.” **Angel Sherburne, EVS, Swedish Medical Center, Executive Board Member**

## UW has the ability to make our workplace safer right now by doing the following:

- Release the CDC-recommended PPE that will keep us safe, including N95 masks
- Offer Extra Shift Incentives and meet with us to create additional solutions to address staffing
- Stop prioritizing furloughs and work with us on addressing staffing and the safe reassignment of healthcare workers throughout UW Medicine