

May 1, 2020

COVID-19 AND 'CORONAVIRUS' UPDATES

CARRIE L. BYINGTON, MD

Executive Vice President, UC Health



THE IMPACT ON OUR HEALTH SYSTEM

This is the 12th update for Regents regarding the SARS-CoV-2 virus pandemic and the impact on the University's health and academic enterprise.

As of May 1, California had 50,442 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 2,073 fatalities, according to the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#), and the U.S. passed another milestone with more than 1 million cases nationally with 62,406 deaths, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). Thus far, we are aware of two UC employees who have died due to COVID-19, one who worked as a shuttle bus driver at UC Santa Cruz and, last week, a facilities management employee who worked in UCLA Health Sciences buildings. The sad reality is that we may experience more loss, given the size of UC's workforce and the prevalence of the virus. To all who have lost someone, our thoughts are with you.

On April 28, [six Bay Area counties extended their stay-at-home orders](#) through May 31, although with easing of some restrictions for business that operate outdoors.

UCOP and the UC Health division office will continue remote operations. Nearly six weeks since the statewide stay-at-home order was issued, people are understandably anxious to return to a degree of normalcy.

In a sign that states recognize the need for coordinated action, Colorado and Nevada have joined the [Western States Pact](#), which includes Oregon, Washington state and California.



NEW CLINICAL SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 RECOGNIZED

This week the [CDC expanded the list of symptoms](#) that may indicate COVID-19. Chills, repeated shaking with chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat and loss of taste and smell join previously announced symptoms of coughs, fever, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. You may recall that [UC San Diego Health researchers](#) recently confirmed loss of taste and smell as an indicator of the virus.

FDA GRANTS EMERGENCY USE OF REMDESIVIR FOR COVID-19

Some good news this week from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIH) announcing preliminary results from the first randomized controlled trial of remdesivir. Randomized controlled trials are considered the gold-standard when evaluating the effectiveness of medications. The [results from an 800-person clinical trial](#) suggests that the antiviral drug remdesivir accelerates recovery, and there was a trend towards reduced mortality from advanced and severe COVID-19. Patients who received remdesivir had a 31% faster time to recovery than those who received a placebo, and a slightly lower mortality rate (8% versus

11.6%). On May 1, the Food and Drug Administration (**FDA**) granted an emergency use authorization for patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

UC Health enrolled patients across the system in the multinational NIH trial.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, NIH director, stated that Gilead’s investigational antiviral remdesivir “has a clear-cut significant positive effect in diminishing time to recovery” for patients with COVID-19. “This will be the standard of care.”

We hope that remdesivir is the first of many effective treatments identified for COVID-19. We are testing many others across the UC Health system (see Table).

NEARLY 30 CLINICAL TRIALS IN FLIGHT AT UC

UC continues to expand the number of clinical trials underway for COVID-19 treatment. There are 23 investigational agents being studied in 29 active and pending trials, including UC’s first vaccine trial out of UC San Diego Health.

Laurie Herraiz, executive director of UC BRAID, attributes the rapid expansion to "The incredible group of dedicated, tireless, and brilliant physicians across UC."

Well said!

Pending and Active Clinical Trials at All Five Medical Centers	Pending and Active Clinical Trials at All Five Medical Centers
<p>Remdesivir (NCT04280705)</p> <p>Some recently launched trials are not yet listed on ClinicalTrials.gov at the time of this publication.</p>	<p>Sarilumab – Davis and UCLA (NCT04315298) DAS181– UCLA and UCSD (NCT03808922) Tocilizumab – UCLA and UCSD (NCT04320615) Azythromycin – UCSF (NCT04332107) Mesenchymal stem cells – UCSF (NCT03818854) HCQ (prevention) – Davis and UCSF (NCT04332991) HCQ (treatment) – UCLA (NCT04328961) Acetaminophen and Ascorbate – UCSF (NCT04291508) Colchicine – UCSF (NCT04322682) Colchicine – UCLA (NCT04355143) Aviptadil – Irvine (NCT04311697) PUL-042 – Irvine (NCT04313023) PUL-042 – Irvine (NCT04312997) Azithromycin/HCQ- UCSF VA (NCT04363203) Azithromycin/HCQ- UCSF (NCT04358081) Azithromycin/HCQ- UCSD (NCT04358068) Leronlimab – UCLA (NCT04347239) Leronlimab – UCLA (NCT04343651) Canakinumab – UCSF (NCT04334980) Selinexor – Davis and UCLA (NCT04349098) Gimsilumab – UCLA (NCT04351243) Mavrilimumab – UCLA (Pending) Hyperbaric Oxygen – UCSD (NCT04327505) Inhaled Nitric Oxide – Davis and UCSD (NCT02725372) Oral Vaccine - UCSD (NCT04334980) Ramparil – UCSD (NCT04366050) TAK-981– UCSD (NCT03648372) Convalescent Plasma- UCSF (pending)</p>

STATUS OF SURGE AND RESUMPTION OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

As seen on our daily dashboard, the number of UC Health inpatients with COVID-19 has remained relatively stable, an indication that social distancing and stay-at-home orders are helping 'flatten the curve.'

This gives us confidence we can gradually resume essential procedures and preventive care, while retaining the ability to immediately adjust if a patient surge occurs. The decision about resumption will be based on local conditions. Procedures will be prioritized based on the patient's condition and judgement of the patient's physician or surgeon that further delays in care will foreseeably have a negative medical impact on the patient's condition.

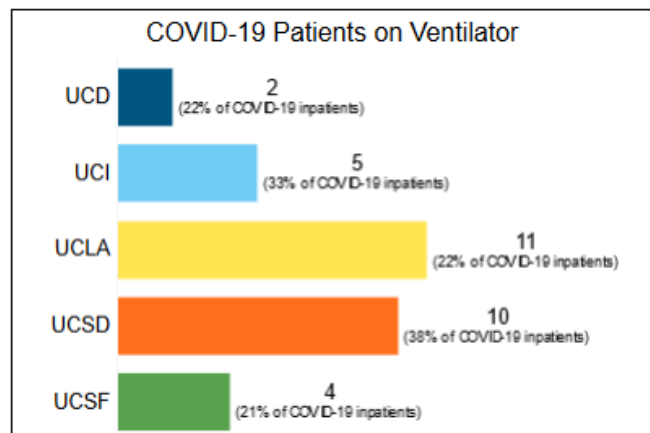
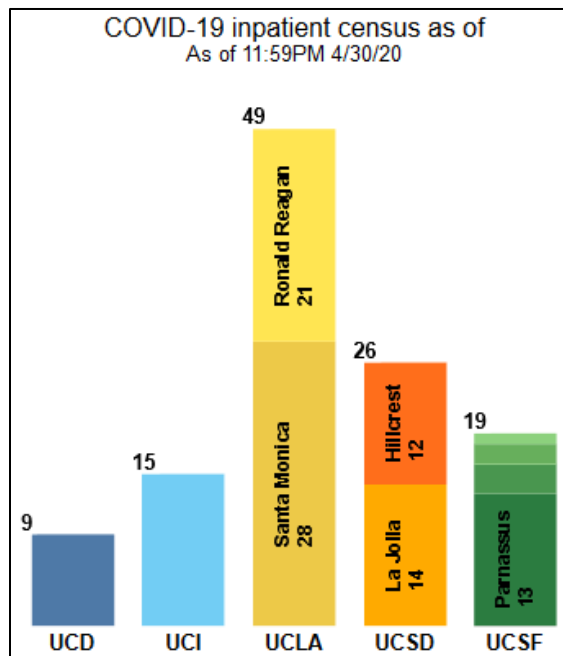
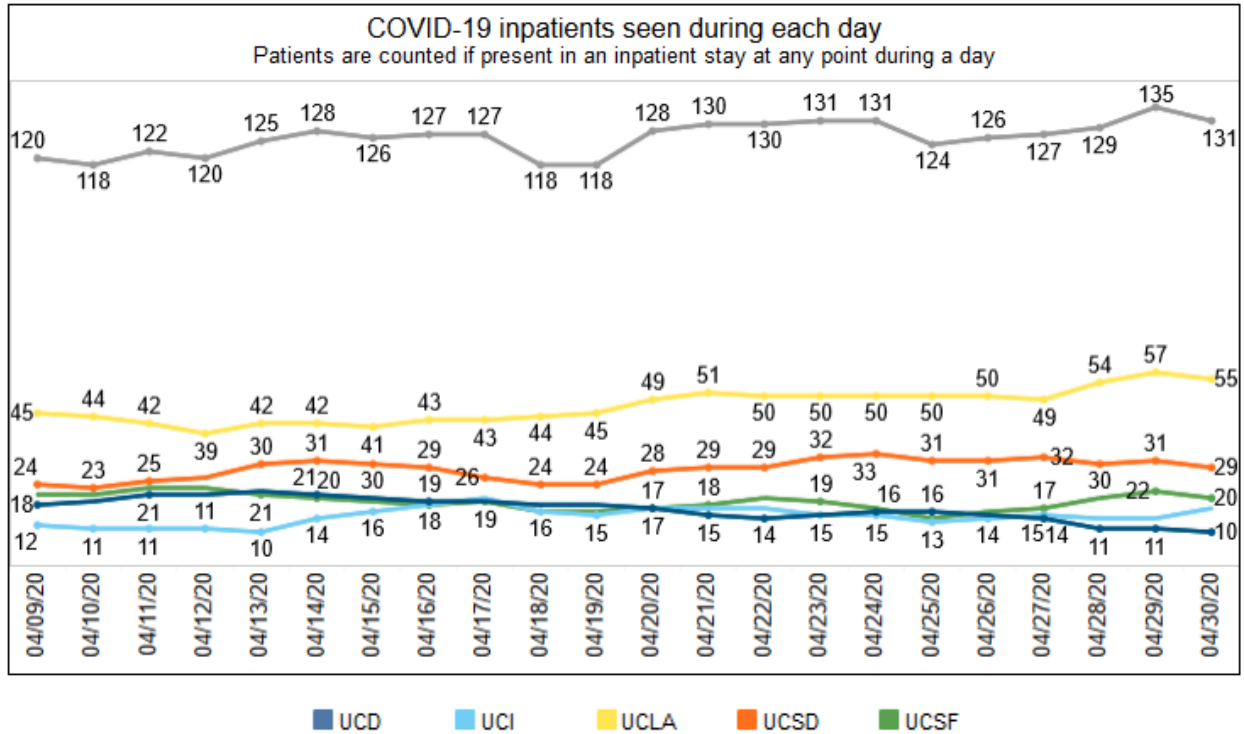
UC Health actions are consistent with [guidance issued April 27 by CDPH](#). To further assist our hospitals navigate a responsible resumption of services, UC health developed ten guiding principles. They are:

1. We will remain prepared for potential surges and monitor indicators and trends. We provide transparency into our operating status via dashboards published on [@UofCAHealth](#).
2. We will continue expanding screening and testing protocols. All inpatients are now tested for the virus.
3. Visitors will be permitted, with precautions, to support our patients. We've all seen the emotional distress on patients and families who could only have contact via phone.
4. Universal masking will be observed. This includes all patients, visitors, faculty, staff and trainees.
5. Employees in high risk groups should continue to exercise caution. This includes those over 65 years of age, people who are immunosuppressed, people who are pregnant and those who suffer from heart disease.
6. Resumption of deferred essential services will be based on local conditions. This includes availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as critical care beds and ventilators.
7. Qualified health care providers will determine which patients are at risk if procedures are further delayed.
8. Contact tracing will continue for employees who test positive, in consultation with local public health authorities.
9. Telehealth will continue to be used when feasible to limit the risk of exposure.
10. Physical distancing will be encouraged and each location will publish a plan to support patient and workplace safety.

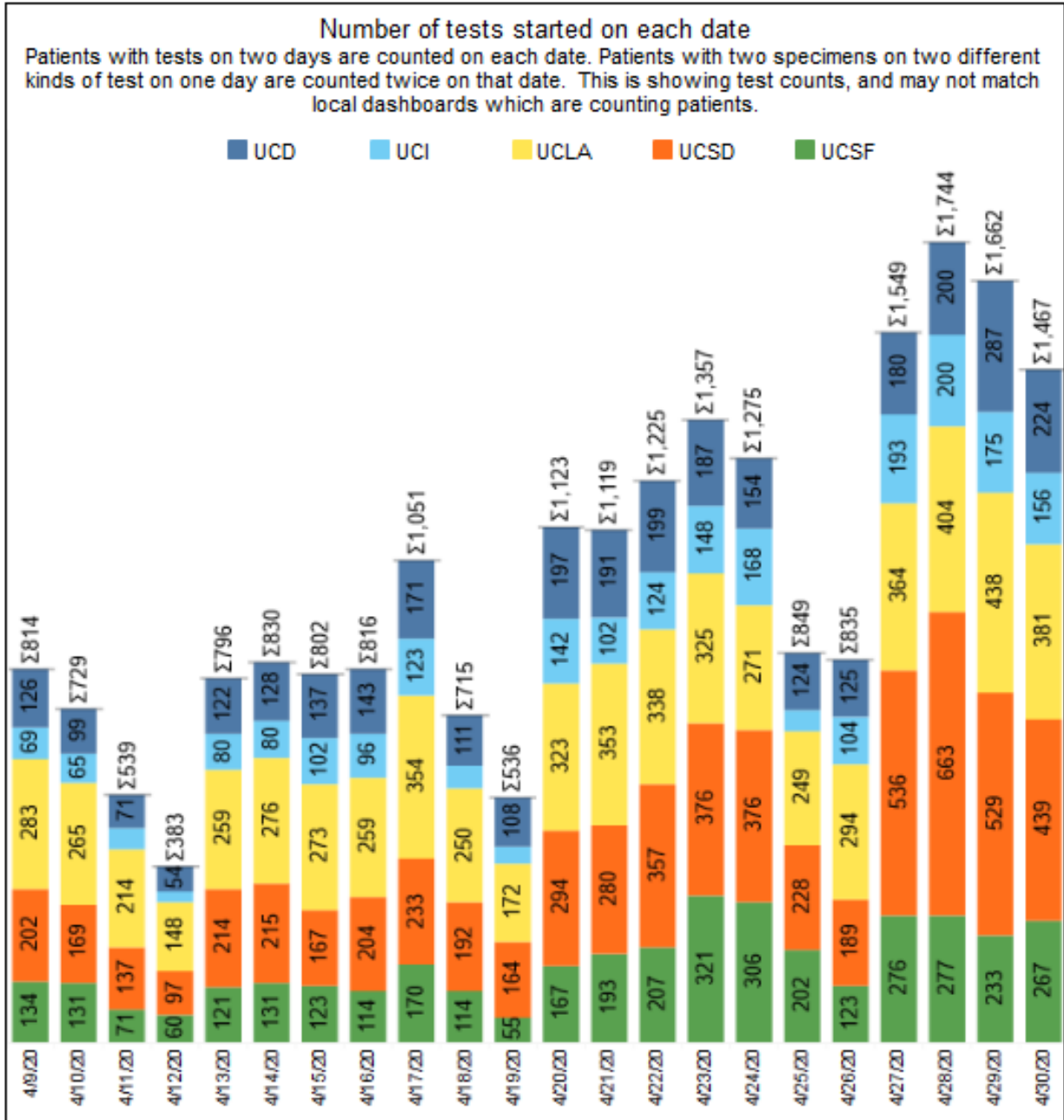
I want to emphasize that resumption of these services is a reflection of the role UC hospitals play in maintaining public health. Services that are purely elective and without medical urgency are not permitted. Cancer removal surgery, neurosurgery and heart surgery are examples of the types of procedures that will resume to preserve the health of the patient.

The prudent resumption of services should not be misinterpreted as an indication that the danger posed by COVID-19 has passed. To the contrary, as other states relax their restrictions and some Californians congregate contrary to the Governor's guidance, we remain vigilant and concerned about further outbreaks.

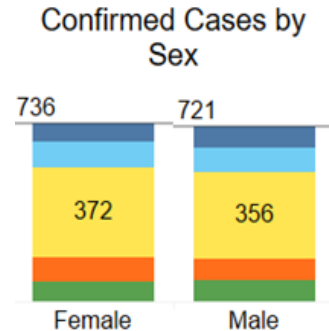
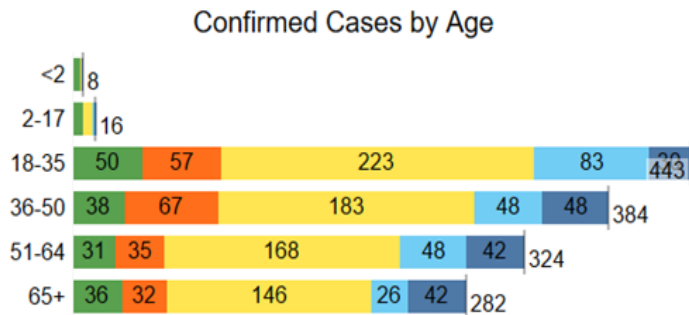
If we detect a surge, UC hospitals will again cancel procedures to increase capacity. As you may recall, we added 1,481 beds to our existing 3,911 bed count, have more than 900 ICU beds and more than 700 ventilators systemwide.



Source: UC Health Data Warehouse



More than 35,000 tests have been performed to date on UC Health patients, with a positive rate of **4.3%** on tests with results delivered. Source: UC Health Data Warehouse



HOSPITALS IN LA MARKET COORDINATE OUTREACH TO PATIENTS



Although emergency departments (**EDs**) in hard-hit regions report overflowing emergency rooms, EDs in other parts of the nation have experienced a sharp decline in use as patients avoided seeking care. This is also the case at several UC EDs.

According to several recent studies cited in [Modern Healthcare](#), nearly a third of Americans have delayed seeking care recently out of fear of catching the virus or a desire to not place additional demands on hospitals. Both the [Urban Institute](#) and the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) cite the economic realities of losing employment and insurance, illustrating how costs of care may further exacerbate health disparities. As noted by [CDPH guidance](#), this deferral of care can create its own public health impacts.

In Los Angeles, UCLA Health is joining with other health systems to encourage people to seek care when they need it and to talk with their physician about their overall health. “Life may be on pause. Your health isn’t” is the message. Each health system is contributing a portion of its existing media buy to support the effort. Other participating health systems include Cedars-Sinai, Dignity Health, Kaiser Permanente, Keck Medicine of USC and Providence.

TESTING OF ED IN SAN DIEGO WORKERS SHOWS VERY LOW INFECTION RATE

ESTIMATED COVID ASYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEE PCR				
Date	Orders	Results	Positive	% Positive
22-Apr	81	81	0	0.0%
23-Apr	149	149	0	0.0%
24-Apr	103	103	1	1.0%
27-Apr	198	198	0	0.0%
28-Apr	168	81	0	0.0%
Total	699	612	1	0.2%

In an effort to have better situational awareness regarding COVID-19 in our workplace, we have begun to test health care workers across the system.

UC San Diego Health tested approximately 700 employees who work in its EDs recently and found an infection rate of 0.2 percent, using the polymerase chain reaction (**PCR**) test that looks for the virus itself.

ESTIMATED COVID ASYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEE IgG				
Date	Orders	Results	Positive	% Positive
22-Apr	93	93	0	0.0%
23-Apr	141	141	0	0.0%
24-Apr	96	96	0	0.0%
27-Apr	199	199	2	1.0%
28-Apr	172	107	2	1.9%
Total	701	636	4	0.6%

Subsequent immunoglobulin testing that looks for the IgG antibody indicating a prior infection found a 0.6 percent infection rate, representing four people. Of those four, two were among those who had previously tested positive by PCR. This low infection rate should give confidence to patients and to colleagues who are concerned about the risk of viral exposure in hospital settings. Other UC

medical centers are also testing health care workers.

FUNDS FROM FEDERAL CARES ACT BEGINS TO FLOW TO UC

The federal government has passed several stimulus bills, including the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The Act provides some relief to hospitals impacted by COVID-19, but falls far short of offsetting the UC Health's economic losses. Thus far UC hospitals have received two tranches of funding totaling \$287.8 million.

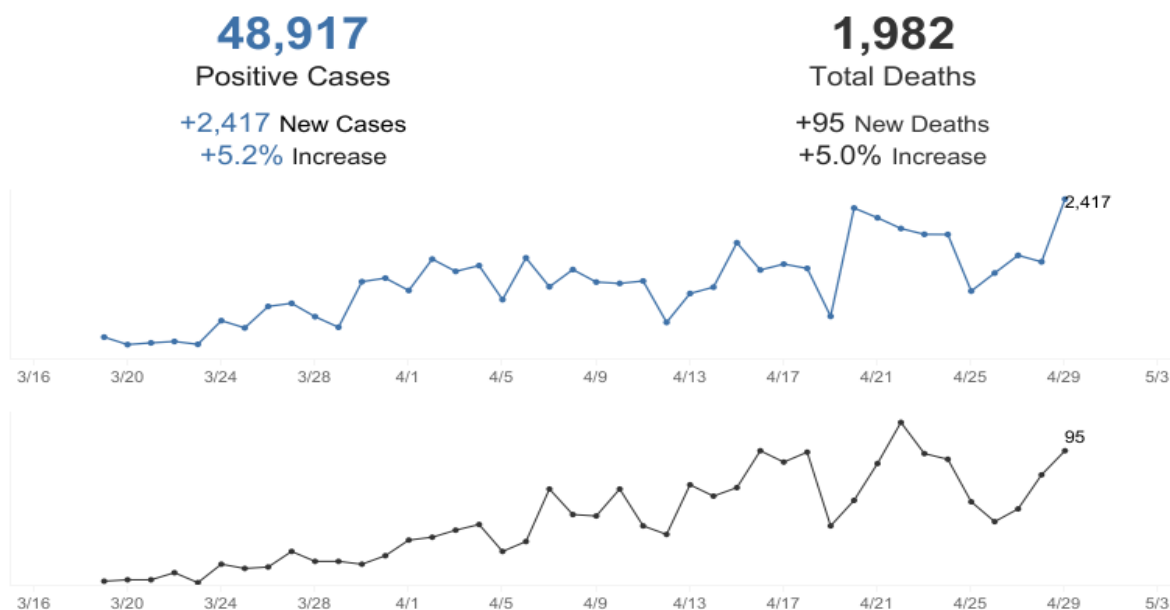
Health Location	CARES Tranche 1	CARES Tranche 2	Total by Location
UC Davis Health	\$34.2	\$16.20	\$50.4
UCI Health	\$16.3	\$11.0	\$27.3
UCLA Health	\$37.0	\$17.8	\$54.8
UC San Diego Health	\$28.0	\$15.1	\$43.1
Benioff Children's Oakland	--	\$11.8	\$11.8
UCSF Health	\$42.0	\$38.4	\$80.4
Physician Practice Groups	\$20.0	--	\$20.0
TOTALS	\$177.5	\$110.3	\$287.8

We will continue to advocate for further relief. As a safety net system, we are particularly aware of needs related to care for patients who have lost employer-based health benefits.

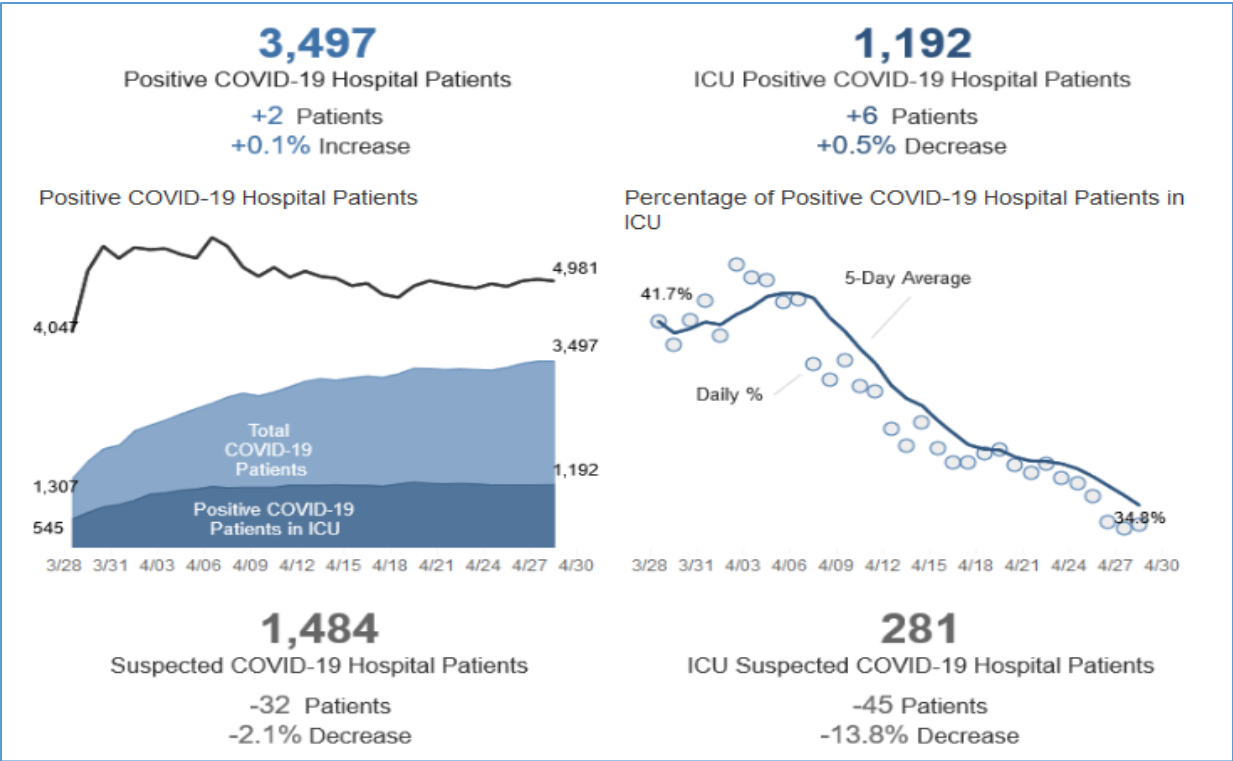
CDPH INTRODUCES NEW STATEWIDE DASHBOARDS

CDPH has introduced two new tools to disseminate information about statewide testing for COVID-19, deaths and differences in race and ethnicity. The tools were highlighted in an [April 28 interview of Dr. Sonya Angell, director of CDPH, by The New York Times](#).

The [graphs provide extensive detail](#), charted on a day-to-day basis, and based on more than 625,000 tests performed in the state to date.

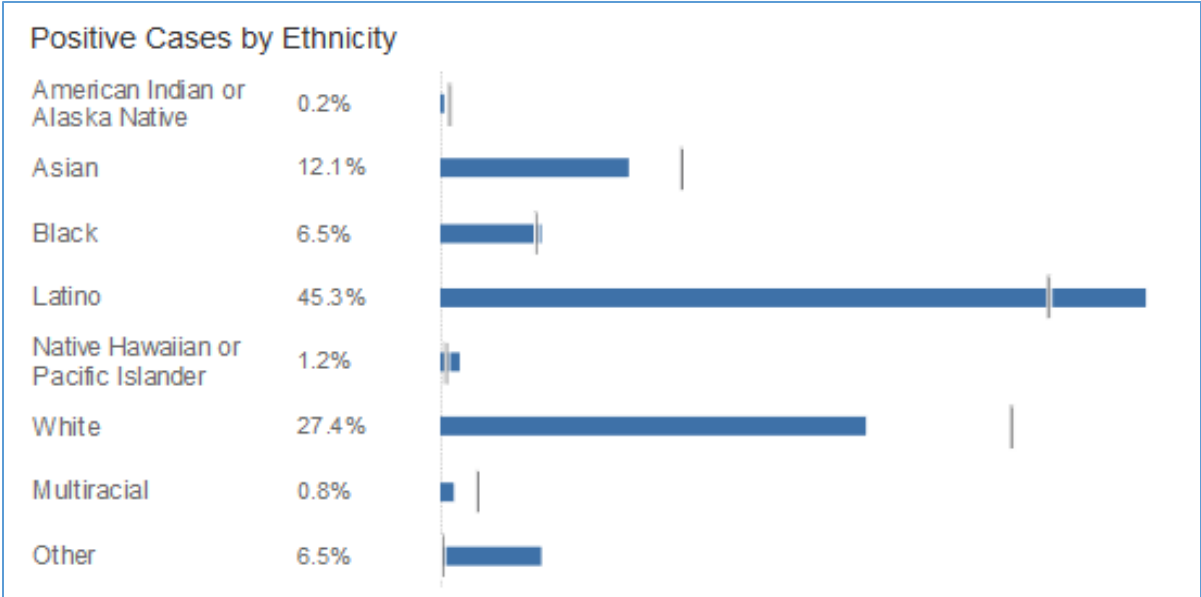


Source: [CDPH Dashboards](#)



Source: [CDPH Dashboards](#)

The CDPH resource tracks the number of total hospitalizations and the number of patients with a COVID-19 diagnosis in intensive care. The CDPH resource also maps infections and deaths per county, and by gender, age and race and ethnicity.



The vertical grey line denotes percent of total California population. Hispanics and African-Americans are disproportionately impacted. Source: [CDPH Dashboards](#)

We are dedicated to health equity across UC Health and continue to work to reduce health disparities related to COVID-19. UCLA is providing health services at 13 recreational centers that are serving as shelters and the LA Rescue Mission. UCSF Health provided testing in San Francisco's Mission District last weekend and is providing testing for public health departments statewide. UC San Diego Health expanded its remote tele-IUCI coverage for El Centro Regional Medical Center.

UC HOSPITALS BEGIN USING CONVALESCENT PLASMA

In my update of April 3, I noted the potential of convalescent serum to improve a patient's ability to fight off the infection and, potentially, to instill short-term resistance to infection in those that have not been exposed. UC Health established a UC Convalescent Blood Plasma (CBP) Working Group to establish uniform standards and advocate to ensure the availability of CBP products. The group is also working to identify local and nationwide opportunities for clinical trial participation that aligns with priorities of blood bank directors and COVID-19 clinical researchers.

Per FDA regulations, convalescent plasma must be collected by an FDA licensed or registered plasma donation center. UCLA Health and UCI Health operate approved convalescent blood plasma donation sites for clinical research and treatment. UCSF collects plasma donations through an agreement with a private company, [Vitalant](#), and UC Davis is exploring doing the same. UC San Diego Health is working with other area hospitals to establish a regional supply.

In another example of the power of “systemness,” a patient at UC Davis received convalescent plasma provided by the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center, which collects plasma from 10-20 donors each week. Each donation yields 2-4 units of approximately 200-400 milliliters.

Dr. Sarah Barnhard, medical director of Transfusion Services at UC Davis Health, notes "when I requested this product from UCLA for a patient in need, I was met with utmost kindness from them and concern for our patient. It was an extra effort on their part to get this to us and was a display of true UC-wide collaboration."

The use of convalescent plasma for COVID-19 is another example of UC Health participating in nationwide clinical trials. I am monitoring the outcomes of patients undergoing this therapy and will provide an update on its efficacy in the future.

UCLA HEALTH TEAMS UP WITH BEYONCE FOR PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH

UCLA, in partnership with Beyoncé’s BeyGOOD initiative, has created an online COVID-19 Care Package to help people struggling with stress and anxiety brought on or worsened by the



novel coronavirus pandemic. This is the first offering from UCLA’s new [STAND Together During COVID-19 website](#), which helps people cope through self-care strategies and exercises based on research-backed cognitive behavioral therapy principles.

“We are living through an inflection point in human history, and across the globe people are naturally experiencing increased stress, anxiety and depression,” said UCLA Chancellor Gene Block. “Creating the STAND Together During

COVID-19 website builds naturally on UCLA's ongoing relationship with Beyoncé and her charitable work. UCLA is bringing all its research and expertise to bear in order to serve the greater community during this uncertain time, and one of the many ways we are doing that now is by providing mental wellness guidance."

UC RIVERSIDE PROVIDES SHELTER FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

I am so proud of UC Riverside and UC Riverside Health for providing temporary housing for clinicians who are concerned about bringing the virus to their homes and families.

The Riverside County Medical Association (RCMA) asked area hotels and organizations for temporary space. "UCR is the only university in the region that has responded to the call for housing, said Sonya Jackson, director of physician workforce development for the RCMA. The gesture was featured in [The Press-Enterprise](#).

The temporary housing is on the top floor of UC Riverside's Extension center, which formerly served as a hotel. The top floor is typically used by visiting faculty, but otherwise has gone unused [since the campus closed in-person activities on March 13](#) at the order of Riverside County Public Health.

This exemplifies our public service mission.



4-H STUDENTS MAKES PPE OUT OF DISCARDED MATERIALS

When you think about suppliers of PPE, the 4-H youth program probably doesn't come to mind. However, they've launched an innovative program that converts discarded Steri-wrap material into PPE such as general masks. The 4-H program is designed to provide young people with practical hands-on learning and to teach leadership skills.

4-H has launched a 'Million Masks' effort to help health care workers and patients, and to help students continue their activities during a time when many students are at home and unable to participate in in-person group activities. The California State 4-H Office is supported by UC's Agricultural and Natural Resources Division, under the leadership of Mark Bell, systemwide provost for strategic initiatives and statewide programs.

The students collect the material used to wrap sterile instruments, Steri-wrap, and hand-make sturdy masks that are effective for reducing viral transmission by the wearer. "The masks are great, very durable," said Johnese Spisso, CEO of UCLA hospital system, which has been using the donated masks. Other UC hospitals are now saving steri-wrap, donating them to the students and looking forward to receiving the finished product.

This is an amazing example of ingenuity.



SOME OF THE HEROES OF THE PANDEMIC



- 1st row L: UCLA Emergency Department send encouragement to East Coast colleagues ([video](#)).
- 1st row R: UCI Health CEO Chad T. Lefteris created a [makeshift commissary](#) for employees.
- 2nd row L: [UC Riverside SOM students](#) help triage COVID-19 calls from worried parents.
- 2nd row R: UC Berkeley's School of Public Health panel on racial inequities & COVID-19 ([video](#)).
- 3rd row L: UC Davis physicians work on [standards of care](#) of newborns during COVID-19.
- 3rd row R: UCSD Nurse Amy Markley kept [Joe and Helen Davis](#) connected when both got sick.
- 4th row L: UCSF [Anesthesia Div. of Global Health Equity](#) and [Heal Initiative](#) at Navajo Nation.
- 4th row R: UCSF students set up protective equipment [donation sites](#) at Bay Area pharmacies.

KEEPING PEOPLE INFORMED THROUGH PUBLISHED MATERIALS

UC campuses and OP are publishing informational and educational materials for the public, our students and staff. UCOP is distributing guidance to facilitate smooth operations, including:

- [President's Letter to Governor Senate President pro Tem and Assembly Speaker](#)
- [President's Letter to UC Community Announcing No COVID-19 Related Layoffs](#)
- [UCOP Innovation & Entrepreneurship Research Collaborations](#)
- [Equity and Inclusion in the Face of COVID-19](#)
- [Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Paid Leave and Remote Work Provisions -](#)
- [President's Letter to the UC Community](#)
- [President's Directive on Travel to Level 2/3 Countries; MRT Emergency Powers](#)
- [How UC is Responding to the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Guidance for UC Locations](#)
- [President's Directive on Travel to China](#)
- [President's Directive on Travel to Korea and other Warning - Level 3 Countries](#)
- [Information for Parents and Students](#)
- [A Summary of UC's System Involvement in COVID-19 Patient Care and Research](#)

You can also find the latest travel information on the CDC website - [Information for Travel](#).

IN CLOSING

Like you, I'm experiencing the fatigue that comes with a feeling of being locked down.

The separation from people, worrisome news, and the losses both large and small that we are all facing can wear on even the strongest person. In these times, I try to focus on maintaining compassion for those around me, developing resilience and expressing gratitude.



I am taking time to connect with those I don't often see through letters and Zoom. I recently had a virtual reunion on Zoom with members of my medical school class. I'm also talking more with extended family and friends, and encourage you to do the same to retain the social bonds even as we mind physical distancing.

I find that remembering happier times also can help. I finally organized photos from a trip to Spain in October 2018 with my sister.

Wherever your family and friends are, let them know you are thinking about them. These are the relationships that can sustain us in these stressful times and help us to focus on **the goal of breaking the cycle of SARS-CoV2 transmission.**

Fiat Lux.

Sincerely,
Carrie L. Byington, MD
Executive Vice President
UC Health