



COVID-19: Higher Education & Healthcare Partnerships

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The Challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic is taxing our nation's healthcare systems and prompting communities to explore creative strategies to support the health and safety of their residents. Based on the experience of countries first hit by COVID-19, we anticipate the demand for hospital beds, medical personnel, supplies, and community support will increase exponentially in the days and weeks ahead. With all 50 states now reporting cases of COVID-19, public health experts predict hospitals will soon be unable to accommodate everyone who needs care.

Colleges and universities are uniquely positioned to respond to this national healthcare crisis, given their expertise, people, facilities, and supplies. ***In our considered opinion, we anticipate that many higher education institutions will be called upon to serve as extensions of local and regional hospitals, clinics, and community support.*** As trusted advisors, we want to help our higher education partners consider how to prepare to offer the support that may be requested or mandated by government agencies.

How Colleges and Universities Can Provide Support

Medical Personnel, Infrastructure, and Supplies

Medical facilities that lack the capacity to respond to growing demand may turn to nearby higher education institutions for assistance. Colleges and universities may consider:

- Providing campus grounds or facilities for **makeshift hospitals**
- Providing **drive-through testing spaces** for patients reporting symptoms
- Utilizing existing **on-campus clinics** for triage and testing
- Providing **residence hall rooms, gymnasiums, or other large facility spaces** as quarantine sites to reduce transmission of the virus
- Calling upon health sciences practitioners, instructors, and students with necessary qualifications to volunteer as **reserve personnel** to extend healthcare services
- Donating **medical supplies** from campus clinics, medical and nursing schools to hospitals
- Providing facilities for **recovery support of patients** not infected by COVID-19
- Providing **necessary supplies for makeshift quarantine** or medical facilities, such as residence hall beds
- Providing **masks, gloves, and other personal protective gear** that may otherwise be stored in research or medical training facilities

Community Support

Higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to offer support to their communities during this time. Opportunities include:

- Providing **meals to families in need** who otherwise rely on the public school system to feed their children or no longer have income to support the purchasing of food and supplies
- Providing **childcare to medical personnel, first responders, and teachers** whose children are no longer in school
- Offering guidance on managing **psychological trauma**
- Utilizing campus mental health professionals to provide **mental health support**

Research Support

Research universities are, of course, vital partners in the nation's COVID-19 response. Experts with research backgrounds will be called upon to address this public health challenge in many ways, including:

- Partnering with private research organizations to provide **research expertise and facilities** to contribute to the development of vaccines, treatments, and devices
- Working to develop **testing methodologies** to increase testing capabilities
- **Providing epidemiological expertise, including analyzing transmission** patterns
- Providing guidance on how to **discourage high-risk behavior**

Planning Teams

As you consider the role your institution may play as a partner with your local community and healthcare providers, we encourage the formation of a multi-disciplinary planning team that may differ from emergency response teams already in place. In addition to including senior leaders, local government and healthcare leaders, consider engaging colleagues with expertise in the following areas:

- Campus health
- Child Care Center
- Communications
- Environmental health and safety
- Event management
- Facilities and grounds management
- Finance
- Food services
- Government and community relations
- Health sciences
- Human resources
- Information technology
- Legal services and compliance
- Student affairs
- Parking and transportation
- Police and security
- Procurement
- Public radio and TV stations (located on campus)
- Risk management
- ROTC and other military personnel on campus

How Segal Can Support You

We recognize this is an unprecedented and evolving situation for higher education, and your Segal partners are available to support you as you begin to prepare to serve as extensions of your community or region's community response or healthcare system. Segal can assist you in the following ways:

- **Community Convening:** Assisting you in identifying and bringing together key partners and stakeholders, facilitating planning efforts, and developing specific action plans and strategies
- **Implementation Planning and Project Planning:** Identifying, sequencing, and detailing key steps in turning plans into action
- **Execution Support:** Assisting in logistics planning, coordination, roll out, and implementation of support programs
- **Communication Support:** Partnering with stakeholders in the development of communication strategies, plans, mechanisms, and change management tactics to keep stakeholders informed
- **Leadership Guidance:** Supporting leaders to think through options and consider solutions in addition to serving as thought partners during this very volatile period

For additional information, please contact:
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