



JNESO

DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUOE / AFL-CIO
the professional health care union

TEL: (732) 745-2776
FAX: (732) 828-6343
WEB: WWW.JNESO.ORG
MEMBERS: (800) 292-0542

1225 LIVINGSTON AVE., NORTH BRUNSWICK, NJ 08902

ELFRIEDA V. JOHNSON, RNC, PRESIDENT
DOUGLAS A. PLACA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Contact: Stacey Ehling, 609-408-2461, stacey@princetonosc.com

For Immediate Release

COVID-19 Protection: Nurses Demand Plans, Training and Proper Equipment

Pocono, PA/North Brunswick, NJ -- Just washing your hands isn't enough protection for nurses and healthcare workers on the frontlines of caring for people who have been diagnosed with, or may have been exposed to, the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

JNESO District Council 1, the Professional Healthcare Union, is calling on hospital and medical facility administrators to step-up and take action to ensure that the needs of nurses and other healthcare professionals are made a priority.

"For nurses and other frontline healthcare workers, preventing exposure to the virus needs to be the highest priority," said Mona Hartle, President of the JNESO LVH-Pocono chapter. "If one nurse gets sick in a facility, it could result in a domino effect that could impact multiple nurses on a floor or unit, and create significant staffing problems and a shortage of qualified, trained caregivers."

"The shortage of critical medical supplies and proper protective gear is crucial for nurses who can see hundreds of patients each day and are at an even greater risk for potential exposure to COVID-19, but this is more than just a supply issue," said Douglas Placa, Executive Director of JNESO. "Every facility is supposed to have an action plan, but our members are finding that the plans are vague and there has been little to no training as to how to carry out those plans. Our members also need to know the protocols for what will happen if they get sick: will they be able to be tested, will they be quarantined at the facility or sent home. These are questions that still need to be answered."

According to Placa, nurses and healthcare workers across the country are mobilizing to raise awareness of these critical issues. In fact, a group of several healthcare, nursing and labor unions (including JNESO) have joined forces in New Jersey this week to demand that the Governor's Administration and the State Health Commissioner work more aggressively with the Center for Disease Control to address the critical supply shortage and to protect nurses and other healthcare workers who are at the highest risk for exposure and potential infection.

"We are being bombarded with messages about how the public can reduce exposure risks, but social distancing is just not possible for nurses and other healthcare workers who have to deal with and care for the public. What we need now is real action to protect our nurses on the frontlines," remarked Placa.

JNESO District Council 1 is a healthcare union representing more than 5,000 nurses and other healthcare workers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.jneso.org.

###