

Banner Lassen Medical Center

Crisis Care Guidelines Provide Framework for Clinicians to Provide Care with Insufficient Resources

1. The latest COVID-19 surge has resurfaced the potential need to draw upon the California SARSCoV-2 Pandemic Crisis Care Guidelines, a document released by the California Department of Public Health in June that no one whose daily work involves saving lives would prefer to ever need to use.

- This unprecedented crisis has resulted in a new, harsh reality – the possibility of health care professionals having to manage scarcity.
- The numbers and projections, as we approach 2 million cases in California, suggest health care workers may not have enough of what's needed — staff, personal protective equipment, testing capabilities, ventilators and other life-saving machines — to provide maximum care to each and every patient.
- This is a grim prospect, and one whose gravity is deeply felt by health care leaders and clinicians.

2. The Crisis Care Guidelines – a framework for health care professionals to plan for a surge of unimaginable proportions – were developed by the state based on best practices throughout the country and guided by ethical principles.

- The framework aims to ensure that if there is a shortfall of what's needed, health care systems respond in a coordinated, thoughtful manner to make decisions that protect the health of all Californians as best we can with the resources available.
- Every hospital in California has access to these guidelines, and will operationalize them, if needed, in a way that will meet the needs of their patients to the best of their ability.
- The guidance is that each facility should determine and implement its surge and crisis care plans in concert with other partners including any parent health system. Banner Lassen Medical Center is part of Banner Health, a regional health system headquartered in Arizona. Banner Lassen Medical Center will work with Banner Health and utilize the Arizona Crisis Standards of Care (CSC) as the framework for flexible allocation of resources to provide the best care possible in response to the pandemic. Those standards include a COVID19 Addendum: Allocation of Scarce Resources in Acute Care Facilities. The Addendum – commonly referred to as the triage protocol – is NOT active today. These documents are available on our webpage.

3. Crisis care happens only when all other avenues are exhausted. Right now, there is still time to help reduce the need for these measures – by avoiding all unnecessary outings/travel and gatherings for the next several weeks.

- Many regions in the state are near, at, or exceeding the current hospital ICU capacity, and models suggest more patients will be flooding hospitals in the coming weeks.
- This could be exacerbated by non-essential travel and gatherings over the Christmas and New Year holidays.
- AAA projects as many as 84.5 million Americans will journey 50 miles or more from Dec. 23 to Jan. 3, 2021; that's a 30% drop compared to last year, but it's not enough. Hospitals ask all Californians to do their part to alleviate the strain on critical resources, so we can do our part to care for those in need and save lives, including those of our friends and families.