



# Contingency & Crisis Strategies for Mask Usage

Based on CDC guidelines effective 3/26/2020

If your facility is facing a shortage of masks, the following CDC guidelines should be utilized to conserve masks (Contingency Strategy) while maintaining your protection:

- Implement limited re-use of facemasks: **use the same facemask by one provider for multiple encounters with different patients**
  - Remove it after each encounter
- **Do not touch outer surfaces of the mask during care**, if you accidentally touch your mask, immediately perform hand hygiene
  - Facemasks should be carefully folded inward; the outer surface is held against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage.
  - The folded mask is be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container
  - Label your bag or container so another provider does not accidentally use
- The facemask should be removed and discarded if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through.
- Leave patient care area if you need to remove the facemask.

When no facemasks are available (Crisis Strategy), you have two options to protect yourself:

- Wear a face shield that covers the entire front
  - It should extend to the chin and sides of the face with no facemask.
- Wear homemade masks, bandana or scarf for care of patients with COVID-19 as a last resort.
  - Homemade masks are not considered PPE, their capability to protect is unknown.
  - Homemade masks should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face.

## Other PPE tips

- Reserve PPE for direct patient care & use PPE per CDC guidance
- To prevent self-contamination during PPE use, please don and doff correctly, folding inward when removing and then performing hand hygiene after properly disposing

**Remember: all patients with known or suspected COVID-19, with ACTIVE symptoms, will be placed on a medical hold until their symptoms have resolved and their physician has cleared them to resume therapy services.**