



March 28, 2020

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor  
Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20024

RE: Recommendation to Prioritize Localities or Care Settings for PPE Supplies

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Health Industry Distributors Association (HIDA). Our members deliver the full range of medical products to the nation's 300,000 hospitals, nursing homes, physician offices and home care every day. Medical products distributors deliver the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that supports core healthcare services every day and in times of emergency such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

We all share the critical goal of getting PPE and other medical supplies to where they are needed the most in combating COVID-19. With this goal in mind, I am writing to urge FEMA to provide the strategic direction needed to more effectively target PPE supplies based on greatest need.

Since the onset of COVID-19-driven constraints in PPE supplies, our members have appreciated the government's support and utilization of the existing supply chain. Our member CEO's and executives have been personally engaged with the White House Task Force, the Department of Health and Human Services and now, FEMA. They have been pleased to respond with transparency and collaboration to a variety of requests including providing data and subject matter expertise.

Specifically, distributors need FEMA and the federal government to designate specific localities, jurisdictions or care settings as priorities for PPE and other medical supplies. The private sector is not in a position to make these judgements. Only the federal government

has the data and the authority to provide this strategic direction to the supply chain and the healthcare system.

Prioritization gives distributors the direction from the federal government to adjust allocation systems to better target PPE to the COVID-19 “hot spots” and potentially anticipate where the next ones may develop. Current allocation systems have been effective in conserving supplies and preventing excessive stockpiling. They also ensure PPE is available for all providers and supports everyday healthcare services that continue despite the national emergency. However, more precision is required of allocation processes to respond to COVID-19. Prioritization is the fastest way to make the next level of precision a reality.

We understand prioritization is on your agenda but urge you to expedite this work. HIDA members stand ready to collaborate with federal partners with the same transparency and urgency they have brought to previous requests. We are also confident that the initial prioritization framework will be rapidly improved over time as more is learned from data and experience.

This is a recommendation based on our member companies’ experience with COVID-19, experience delivering PPE in previous pandemics and deep knowledge of the logistics required to serve healthcare providers in all sites of care.

I appreciate your consideration of this recommendation and look forward to continued collaboration in dealing with this national emergency. I can be reached at [REDACTED]@hida.org or (703) 838-[REDACTED] for any follow up.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. Rowan  
President and CEO