

Nursing Workforce During the Covid-19 Pandemic: Views from the Field

Steven Brockman-Weber, DNP, RN, MS(HSA), FACHE, NE-BC, CENP
System Chief Nursing Officer -Ascension Texas



Ascension

Ascension Healthcare

Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As one of the leading nonprofit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., we are committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension includes approximately 150,000 associates and 30,000 aligned providers. Ascension operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 150 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

Ascension Texas

Ascension's Texas Ministry Market includes Ascension Providence, based in Waco, Texas, and Ascension Seton and Dell Children's Medical Center, based in Austin, Texas. Over the last century, Ascension Texas has grown from one hospital in Austin and one in Waco to a network of 14 hospitals and more than 120 clinical locations across Central Texas, including four teaching hospitals. Ascension Texas employs over 12,000 associates.

Watching data to drive decisions

Daily look at cases

	New Confirmed Cases last 24 hours	Current Confirmed Cases Inpatient	Confirmed Cases YTD	New PUIs hospitalized (last 24 hours)	Current PUIs inpatient	PUIs hospitalized (last 24 hours)
May 1	153	1,381	6,189	572	452	17,704
May 4	200	1,406	6,483	441	420	18,220

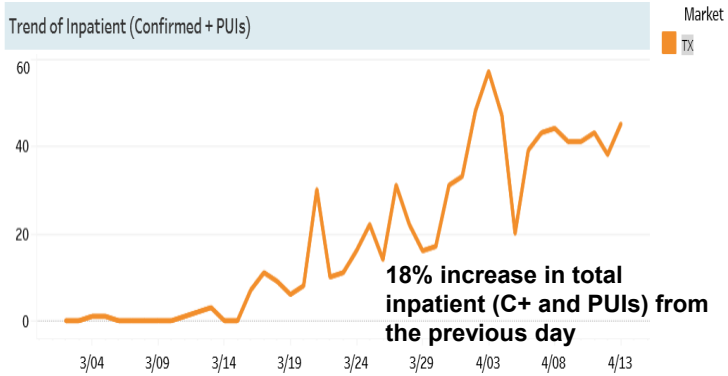
Total deaths 1,131 positive Covid-19 and 207 PUIs

Not actual numbers

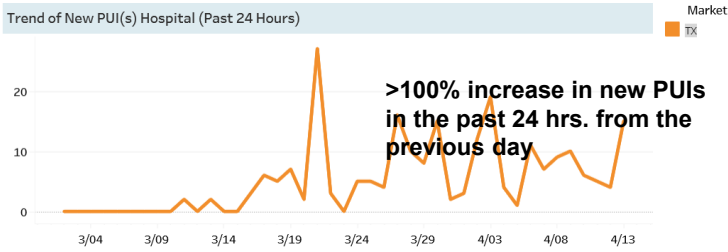
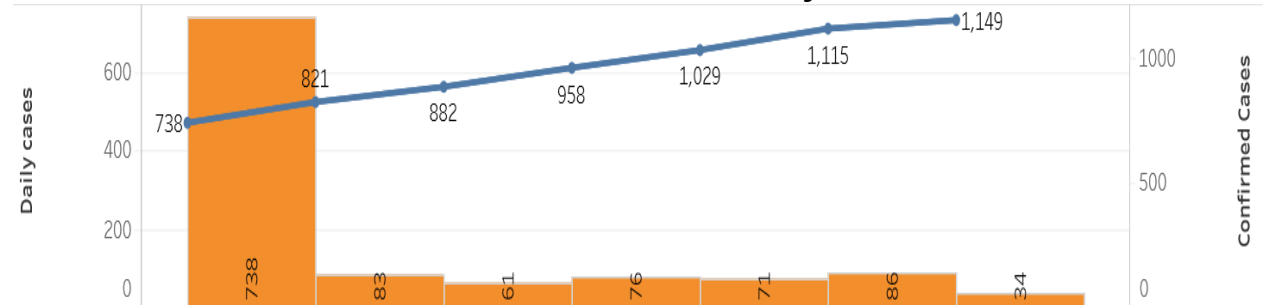
Ministry

Staff Furloughs - 75
 Deaths PUIs - 6
 Deaths Confirmed Cases - 6

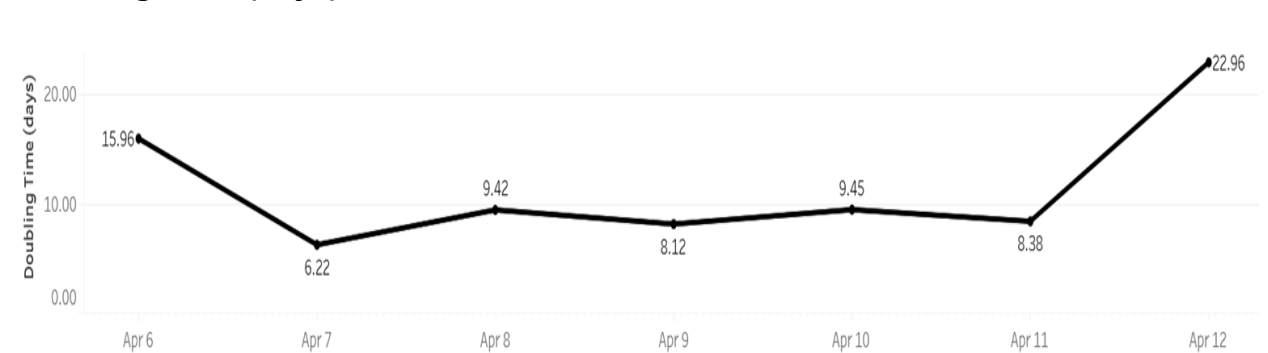
New Confirmed Cases (past 24 hrs.)	Confirmed Cases Inpatient	New PUIs Hospital (past 24 hrs.)	PUIs Inpatient	Deaths Confirmed Cases (past 24 hrs.)	Deaths PUIs (past 24 hrs.)	Deaths Confirmed Cases YTD / Confirmed Cases YTD
5	39	15	6	0	0	5.1%



Confirmed Cases in the counties around the ministry



Doubling Time (days) - 04/06 - 04/12



8% increase in inpatient C+ cases from the previous day

Planning

1. Create capacity
2. Postpone elective procedures
3. Repurpose beds for ICU
 - a. PACU
 - b. ED
 - c. Procedure areas
4. Ramp up telehealth capability
5. Staffing
6. Consider alternative sites of care
 - a. Nursing homes
 - b. LTACS
 - c. Children's beds
 - d. Community planning
7. Recovery
 - a. Resolve, Recover, Reimagine, Thrive



Redeploy Staff

1. Redeploy medical staff
 - a. MD/APRNs/PA
 - i. Credentialing
 - ii. Scope
2. Upskill nurses to work in ICU and Acute Care (nationally 8,000 trained, 1,000 in Texas)
 - a. Functional Nurses
 - i. Acute care nurses can be called to support ED and ICU by general RN competencies
 - ii. Nurses other than acute care such as primary care, care management, education, etc., called to support the acute care nurse.
 - b. Deputized Nurses
 - i. Nurses with previous experience in ICU and/or PACU, stepdown, CCU, PCU or cath lab deployed to support ED and ICU
 - ii. Nurses with previous experience can be deployed to support the acute care nurse
 - c. Training
 - i. Virtual classes, simulation, shadowing
3. Respiratory Surge Capacity
 - a. Professional Critical Caregivers
 - b. Focused Professional Partners
 - c. Patient Care Tech/Support Person

Supporting Staff

Nursing Care:

1. PPE (professional protective equipment)
2. Testing
3. Modify nursing documentation
4. IV tubing Guidance
5. Nursing care in extraordinary times
6. IDRU (infectious disease response unit)

Support:

1. PACT, Center for Resiliency, ON Demand Spiritual Care, virtual Sessions, Nurse Virtual Coaching, EAP
2. Pay continuation
3. Child care stipend
4. Housing
5. Travel nurse program
6. “Behind the Mask-Pandemic Perspectives from the Front Line”

