

Statement from Teresa Paiva Weed, President of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island on COVID-19

The hospitals in Rhode Island have been working collaboratively with the Rhode Island Department of Health through the Healthcare Coalition of Rhode Island to prepare for a pandemic outbreak for decades.

Although coronavirus is a novel virus the hospitals manage small infectious outbreaks as they occur in Rhode Island and have prepared over the last five years for the specific infectious disease of Ebola. Building on those experiences, hospitals have continued to strengthen their surge plans to ensure high-quality patient care and healthcare worker professional safety.

On February 3<sup>rd</sup> the RI Department of Health operationalized the Incident Command System Medical Care Branch to coordinate a statewide response to COVID-19. Since that time hospitals have been in communication with the Medical Care Branch to monitor current capabilities, surge capabilities and personal protective equipment supplies in the event of a Rhode Island outbreak.

*Note: The Healthcare Coalition of Rhode Island (HCRI), co-chaired by the Hospital Association of Rhode Island and the RI Department of Health, serves as a forum for cooperation among organizations to develop a networked plan for interaction and collaboration in disaster-related planning, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts that address Rhode Island's healthcare system. Visit [myhcricri.org](http://myhcricri.org) for more information on COVID-19*