

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION**

Tony Evers, Governor
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Wisconsin's Alternate Care Facility Closing as COVID-19 Hospitalizations Continue to Decrease

Officials continue to urge Wisconsinites to follow public health guidance, wear masks, and get the COVID-19 vaccine when eligible

MADISON — The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) announced today that the decommissioning process has begun for the Alternate Care Facility (ACF) at Wisconsin State Fair Park, as COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state continue to trend downward and Wisconsin remains a leader in the nation for vaccination distribution.

“The Alternate Care Facility was constructed as hospitalizations from COVID-19 were increasing across our state to ensure that our health systems and local governments could continue to provide high-quality care to Wisconsinites,” said DOA Secretary Joel Brennan. “It not only brought relief to our hospitals but also provided quality and compassionate healthcare to Wisconsinites in their time of need.”

“The ACF was a valuable resource during the fall surge of COVID-19 cases. Knowing this facility was available gave providers and health systems confidence that we had options as our own hospitals and clinics filled up with COVID-19 patients. ACF staff was professional, responsive, and easy to work with,” commented Bartho Caponi, MD, UW Health.

A total of 170 individuals received treatment at the facility between October 2020 and January 1, 2021, as part of Wisconsin's continuum of care efforts. On December 22, 2020, the ACF opened a Bamlanivimab (BAM) Infusion Clinic to meet the needs of local southeastern Wisconsin health systems that did not have the capacity at the time to serve their patients with the new outpatient treatment. A total of 37 individuals were treated at the BAM Infusion Clinic.

“On behalf of the Milwaukee Health System CEOs, the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership team, our patients, clinicians, and support staff, we want to thank Deb Standridge, CEO of the Wisconsin State Fair Park Alternate Care Facility, and her entire leadership team for helping us manage a record number of patients at a time when many facilities faced staff shortages due to COVID-19 exposure or illness,” said Ascension Senior Vice President Bernie Sherry. “The collaboration between ACF experts and the Milwaukee health systems laid the groundwork for future partnerships that will benefit all patients in our community.”

In February 2021, the ACF was placed into “mothball” status meaning that it was not actively accepting transfers from hospitals, while DHS and DOA continued to review data and continued conversations with health systems. Sanitation of the facility has already begun, with Wisconsin State Fair Park expected to be back to its original state before the end of April.

“On behalf of the ACF Leadership team and staff, I am honored to have had the opportunity to partner with hospitals across the state to care for COVID-19 patients,” said ACF CEO Debra Standridge. “And I am proud of the work we did in listening and responding to our health care systems’ rapidly changing needs during the pandemic – from adjusting the ACF’s patient admission criteria to diversifying our service offerings to implementing the BAM Infusion Clinic.”

“We are grateful to Wisconsin State Fair Park’s leaders, Board, and staff who have been critical partners throughout the construction and operation of the ACF,” said Brennan. “Their willingness to be flexible and serve their fellow Wisconsinites at a historic time is truly commendable.”

General background information regarding the ACF at Wisconsin State Fair Park is available [here](#).

ACF Background

In April 2020, Gov. Evers announced the construction of the Wisconsin State Fair Park ACF as a critical extension of Wisconsin healthcare systems across our state. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a contract with Gilbane Milwaukee and several Wisconsin sub-contractors, including HGA (Design), Johnson Controls, Staff Electric, F. Ahern, and Hetzel Sanfillipo, to assist in construction. The ACF was a low-acuity facility that was part of a continuum of care provided to Wisconsin residents in response to the pandemic. Funding for the ACF came from the surge reserve fund set aside by Gov. Evers to ensure the ability of Wisconsin hospital systems and communities to handle a surge of COVID-19 cases.

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