

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **WISCONSIN NURSING ORGANIZATIONS ISSUE MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF WEARING MASKS**

#### *Health Care Cannot be Delivered without a Supply of Nurses*

*The Nurses of Wisconsin* is a group of nursing associations<sup>1</sup> that have come together to inform the public about the importance of wearing masks. Wisconsin's hospitals have less than 10 percent of beds available to provide care<sup>2</sup>. Patients in Wisconsin are receiving extensive nursing care for treatment of their COVID diagnosis and/or significant complications related to chronic diseases due to six months of lack of contact with their primary care provider.

Unfortunately, the supply of nurses is dwindling; nurses are out of work due to having COVID, or they are in quarantine because of exposure. "Nurses are losing their resilience and their health and well-being is at risk," states Gina Dennik-Champion, RN, and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Nurses Association. Dennik-Champion shared that the impact of continuous high-tech and high-touch patient care demands are resulting in being overwhelmed, feeling anxious, and an inability to relax and achieve restful sleep. Nurses want to spend more quality time with their family, and they are worried about bringing COVID into the home and exposing their loved ones to the virus.

*The Nurses of Wisconsin* want the public to wear a mask because it makes a difference.

- Evidence shows that wearing a mask protects the individual.
- Evidence shows that wearing a mask protects the community.
- Evidence shows that wearing a mask protects nurses.

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<sup>1</sup> Full list of organizations include (Administrators of Nursing Education Wisconsin (ANEW)); American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) Southeastern WI\Northeastern IL Chapter; Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses Wisconsin (AWHONN); Metro Milwaukee Nurse Practitioners (MMNP); National Association of Hispanic Nurses Greater Milwaukee Chapter (NAHN - Milwaukee Chapter); Racine/Kenosha WI Chapter National Black Nurses Assoc. (R/KC-NBA); Southeastern Wisconsin Oncology Nursing Society (SWONS); Wisconsin Affiliate of American College of Nurse Midwives (WA=ACNM); Nurse Practitioner Forum of the Wisconsin Nurses Association (NP Forum); Wisconsin Association of Nurse Anesthetists (WIANA); Wisconsin Association of Occupational Health Nurses (WAOHN); Wisconsin Association of School Nurses (WASN); Wisconsin Chapter-International Association of Forensic Nurses (WI-IAFN); Wisconsin Center for Nursing (WCN); Wisconsin Director of Nursing Council-Education Forum Inc. (WDONCEF); Wisconsin League for Nursing (WLN); Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders (WOLN); Wisconsin Society of Perianesthesia Nurses (WISPAN); and the Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/hosp-data.htm#capabilities>

As cited by the Center for Disease Control, asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic persons are estimated to account for **more than 50% of transmissions**<sup>3</sup>. This study concluded that individual benefit increases with increased community mask use.

Wisconsin needs everyone to wear a mask to stop the surge of COVID. *The Nurses of Wisconsin* organizations are following the science and strongly support the use of face coverings in the fight against COVID-19. Simply put, it will save lives; please do your part.

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<sup>3</sup> [Community Use of Cloth Masks to Control the Spread of SARS-CoV](#)