

MedStaff Update

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MEDSTAFF SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Stanley Ng

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Tapped to lead the COVID-19 response for University Healthcare Alliance (UHA), Dr. Stanley Ng worked across the health system to coordinate a new care experience for patients at more than 70 clinics. From setting up drive through testing to ramping up telemedicine and standing up regional respiratory care centers, Dr. Ng and the UHA team have brought leading-edge thinking, determination, and compassionate care to UHA's COVID-19 response.

Q: What have the last few months been like as the lead for UHA's COVID-19 response?

I was fortunate to be part of an outstanding team here at Stanford and UHA that had foresight into what was coming and how it would impact ambulatory care. One of the first things we did was get everyone up and running on telemedicine. Thanks to our existing investments in video visits, we were fortunate to ramp up very quickly. This was a significant accomplishment for the entire UHA team. We also understood early on the critical need to test. We set up our first drive through testing site in Pleasanton in March. It was raining that week, and the tent vendor we'd engaged wouldn't set up in the rain. Determined not to delay our services, I went to Home Depot with my kids, and we

purchased and set up the tents ourselves. We now have three testing sites up and running. We also partnered with the Technology and Digital Solutions team to develop new workflows that allowed patients to schedule COVID-19 drive through testing via both MyHealth and our phone schedulers.

Another significant component of our strategy at UHA was the development of an Acute Respiratory Response Team, new screening and triage protocols for our call centers, and regional respiratory centers in Emeryville, Pleasanton, Los Gatos, and Alameda. These efforts allowed us to centralize respiratory patient care, create surge capacity, and maintain a safe care environment for all of our patients.

Q: As we move through the third month of COVID-19 response, how are your plans evolving?

Now that we have our testing and care infrastructure in place, we're able to focus on the compassionate management of our COVID-19 patients. We have a dedicated team doing active outreach to each COVID-19 positive patient. We check on each patient by phone multiple times a week to answer questions, assess their health, and provide social and emotional support. These patients are often very scared, and these extra touch points have been reassuring and greatly appreciated.

Looking ahead, the next big challenge we're planning for is how to handle flu season and COVID-19 at the same time. We're actively working now on preparations for the fall and winter. We're thinking about how we can get more patients immunized for flu and how to safely treat flu and COVID-19 patients at the same time.

Q: What are you most proud of?

The team that I work with. From the UHA leadership team to all levels of our staff, everyone has chipped in and gone above and beyond to help meet this need. In a time when we're facing a deadly virus, a 24-hour news cycle, and so many unknowns, it has been incredible to see everyone bring their unique skillsets to the table to offer the best possible care to our patients. I'm so proud to work in an environment with so many talented people who work together to get things done.

Q: What lessons have you learned?

Be humble. Ask for the support you need to get things done. By myself I would not have accomplished much but thanks to the support of the team around me we were able to develop a robust program to respond to COVID-19. As doctors we often have a mentality that we can do things ourselves, but I've learned that I can be even more successful when I engage a team.

Q: Why do you work on the Stanford Medicine team?

Our core tripartite mission at Stanford Medicine – patient care, education, and research – aligns with my values and drives my work each day. Stanford Medicine offers great opportunities to make a difference in healthcare. Not only are we able to provide leading edge COVID-19 screening and care, we're also doing research around these efforts. It's amazing to be in an environment like this and work with Stanford faculty to solve the most significant problems in healthcare.