

# Most health facilities still using crisis standards for protective equipment

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Many health care facilities still have crisis standards of care for use of

personal protective equipment (PPE), according to the results of a survey released by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC).

APIC conducted an online survey of its U.S.-based infection preventionist members (Oct. 22 to Nov. 5, 2020). The analysis included responses from 1,083 infection preventionists located throughout the United States.

Survey respondents reported that their [health care facilities](#) have implemented PPE crisis standards of care (reusing or extending the life of PPE) for respirators (73.0 percent), masks (68.7 percent), and face shields or eye protection (75.8 percent). This means [health care](#) personnel are reusing or extending the life of PPE traditionally meant for single use. Just over three-quarters of respondents (75.9 percent) said that their health care facilities allow staff to reuse their respirator either five times or as many times as possible, and a similar number (73.6 percent) said the same for masks. Furthermore, respondents reported an increase in health care-associated infections at their facilities since the pandemic began: 27.8 percent reporting increases in central line-associated bloodstream infections, 21.4 percent reporting increases in catheter-associated urinary tract infections, and 17.6 percent reporting increases in ventilator-associated pneumonia or ventilator-associated events.

"It is disheartening to see our health care system strained and implementing PPE crisis standards of care more than eight months into the pandemic," 2020 APIC President Connie Steed, R.N., said in a statement.

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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