

State's Largest Field Hospitals Are Caring For Patients With COVID-19



Members of the Massachusetts National Guard erect a medical field hospital at the DCU Center in Worcester, Massachusetts for the expected influx of patients due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nicolaus Czarnecki/BH

By Marilyn Schairer

April 13, 2020

SHARE

LIS
Mass. COVID-19 Field Hospitals Come Online

The two largest hospitals in Massachusetts' began to admit patients recently as the DCU Center in Worcester took in a dozen and the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center site admitted almost 50.

Anthony Berry, spokesman for UMass Memorial Health Care which is managing the DCU Center field hospital, told *WGBH News* they are ready for a rapid increase in patients from Central Mass as the surge in COVID-19 cases approaches.

"Registered Nurses have been assigned from units within UMass as well as hired from outside," Berry said. "Physicians and advanced practitioners have been reassigned from hospital medicine so far. Supporting departments have also reassigned staff and we have expanded certain vendor contracts."

The 50-thousand square foot facility at D-C-U has 214 beds and six ICU units, while the Convention Center has 1,000 beds ready, with half of those intended for homeless patients.

The Convention Center hospital includes six acute care suites, a physical therapy suite, 52 nurses' stations and 48-bathroom facilities.

All patients at the facility have tested positive for COVID-19, according to Mayor Marty Walsh's office. The field hospital is a collaboration with the offices of Mayor Marty Walsh and Governor Charlie Baker, and Partners HealthCare, Ascension and Boston Health Care for the Homeless.

UMass Memorial Health Care Spokesman Berry said that extra nurses have been hired to ensure it is fully staffed and ready to take as many patients as needed to relieve the pressure on regular hospitals.

"We are prepared for a 100 percent census of inpatients as we approach the surge," Berry said. "We expect to care for patients from our region and from outside of Worcester County as well."