



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Secretary
United States Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Azar & Secretary Wilkie:

The City of New York is resubmitting its request that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provide authorization for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide immediate assistance to help combat the growing impacts from the COVID-19 outbreak. Specifically, we ask that HHS activate the Federal Coordinating Centre (FCC). The VA has been an active partner, along with our City Department of Veterans Services, to serve the over 210,000 veterans who call New York City home.

As the City continues to activate and expand our capacity to address the impacts of this pandemic, we are updating our request for resources from the VA to support our response efforts. The VA's existing infrastructure in the City, stockpile of medical supplies, and highly skilled and trained workforce would provide much needed assistance to our ongoing efforts to protect the health and well-being of all our citizens. In this time of global pandemic, we are asking to partner more closely than ever before, and to be a united front in protecting all New Yorkers.

The City is specifically requesting that the VA provide the following resources to help us manage this outbreak:

- **Activation of Medical Facilities:** We request the activation of all VA hospitals and other medical facilities throughout the five boroughs to help support our ongoing response efforts.
- **Bed Capacity:** The City is currently expanding its bed capacity throughout the five boroughs, but we ask that the VA provide any available beds at VA hospitals or other existing facilities before we reach critical mass. The City intends to expand our bed capacity by the thousands.

- **Staffing Support:** We ask that the VA make any doctors, nurses, and other support staff available to assist our City frontline responders as the virus continues to spread. The City needs thousands of additional health care workers to assist our response efforts.
- **Medical and Safety Supplies:** The City is in critical need of ventilators, swabs, personal protective equipment, including gowns and masks. Approximately, the City needs the following: 15,000 ventilators, 3 million N95 masks, 50 million surgical masks and 45 million face shields, 45 million surgical gowns, 45 million coveralls, and 45 million gloves. We ask that the VA make available any supplies to the City, so we can ensure the health and well-being of those who contract the virus, as well as to protect our frontline responders.

We appreciate the VA's ongoing support to the City of New York and look forward to working together to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens during this crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill de Blasio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "B" and "B" at the beginning and end.

Bill de Blasio
Mayor

CC: Senator Charles E. Schumer