



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON  
DIRECTOR

March 29, 2020

Nursing School Deans

Sent via email

Re: Urgent Staffing Needs for Nursing Students at State Psychiatric Hospitals due to COVID-19

Dear Nursing School Dean:

As you all know, there are several challenging demands on the healthcare workforce around the globe as frontline workers support patients in a variety of clinical settings. Healthcare workers themselves are at risk for contracting COVID-19. With the anticipated surge of COVID-19 patients and the resultant need for increased medical services, there will be ongoing, if not increased need for psychiatric inpatient services.

Within the State of Michigan (SOM) there are five State hospitals (Walter Reuther Psychiatric Hospital near Detroit, Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital in Kalamazoo, Caro Center in Caro, Center for Forensic Psychiatry in Ypsilanti, and Hawthorn Center, a children's psychiatric hospital in Northville). The SOM hospitals are responsible for the care and treatment of some of Michigan's most vulnerable psychiatric patients.

In the current context the SOM is urgently seeking licensed healthcare professionals who can assist by covering patient care duties including shift work for nurses. There are currently several locums tenens contracts that work with SOM to help staff its facilities with clinical staff. If your faculty or other licensed nursing professionals are interested in part-time or full-time temporary work on a contractual basis, please contact me at [MellosG@michigan.gov](mailto:MellosG@michigan.gov).

We are also seeking a broad range of volunteers including nursing students who may currently be unable to work at their usual duties but who are looking for a way to contribute in a healthcare setting. As a volunteer, the nurses would be assigned to support the healthcare workers and other staff, taking temperatures and doing tasks that do not require licensure or clinical supervision. If anyone is interested in this type of activity, please contact Mary Luchies, Central Behavioral Specialist, at [LuchiesM@michigan.gov](mailto:LuchiesM@michigan.gov), our volunteer coordinator, who can facilitate helping a volunteer navigate the system to be able to assist.

We sincerely appreciate your every consideration. We understand that these are difficult times for us all. We hope that the opportunities above will be mutually beneficial.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George E. Mellos".

George E. Mellos, MD  
Senior Executive Psychiatrist Director  
Senior Deputy Director, State Hospital Administration

GM:dm