

## **Respirator and Face Mask Update 03/13/2020**

N95 Respirators continue to be in high demand and low supply, and likely will be more weeks to come. To help reduce the burden on healthcare providers during the coronavirus pandemic, the CMS has implemented **CDC guidance** by stating that facemasks, which protect the wearer from splashes and sprays, are an acceptable temporary alternative to respirators, which filter the air, for most medical services until demand for respirators lessens.

Additionally, the FDA approved a **CDC request for an emergency use authorization (EUA)** to allow healthcare workers to use certain industrial respirators during the COVID-19 outbreak in healthcare settings, and CMS is alerting state surveyors that they are not required – on a temporary basis – to validate the date of a facility's last annual test of the fit of N95 masks worn by workers in Medicare- and Medicaid-certified facilities in order to minimize discarded masks associated with such testing.

See the following link regarding **healthcare supply of personal protective equipment**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe-index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe-index.html)