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### **Healthcare Workers During This Covid-19 Pandemic**

I am grateful to have this opportunity to speak about the sacrificial role that comes with being a health worker during this pandemic. As we speak, hundreds of doctors and nurses have lost their lives when treating Covid-19 patients. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the lives of many people in the last six months or so. Through this time, millions of people have been infected. According to the World Health Organization,27 million cases have been reported so far, and approximately 900.000 people have lost their lives due to this pandemic. During this fight against Covid-19, health workers have been on the frontline treating patients and saving lives. Unfortunately, some of these health workers have succumbed to Covid-19 when working. The increase in Covid-19 cases has made it overwhelming for most health care systems in the world. The result of this is a shortage of health workers, such as nurses and doctors.

Moreover, the overwhelming caseload has led to supplies shortage, as attributed to a failed supply chain. Supplies shortage, especially the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), has posed a significant risk to health workers, increasing their chances of contracting the Covid-19 virus. However, despite a global shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), the health workers

have continued to work diligently by putting their lives on the frontline. Most health workers have had to cut their interactions with their families due to the enormous risks they face daily. The health workers have done so much for us, and we are very grateful. Dying on your duty of work is one of the most significant sacrifices that these workers have undertaken.

Such sacrifices cannot be underestimated, and these workers should be honored for their deeds during such a hard time in the United States and the world. The emergence of the Covid-19 has enlightened many people on the critical role that health workers play in the health sector. Therefore, with this regard, a lot must be done to protect the health workers from contracting Covid-19, show appreciation for their good deeds, and improve the supply chain in hospitals, making it easier to access supplies.

The government should make crucial policy decisions that focus on reducing the risk of being a health worker during this pandemic. Frontline health workers face an increased risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus during their regular duty of work. A cohort study was done by Nguyen et al. done in the UK and the USA to assess the risk of contracting Covid-19 among frontline health workers (2020). The research indicated that compared with the community's general members, frontline workers had an increased risk of contracting a covid-19 (Nguyen et al.,2020). The inadequacy of PPE was considered one of the significant factors that resulted in an increased risk. Currently, the personal protective equipment provided to health workers is inadequate. What does this mean? There is a high likelihood of health workers contracting the virus.

PPEs play a very crucial role in protecting a health worker—moreover, training health workers on the effective use of personal protective equipment. A study done on 420 health workers in Wuhan hospitals between 24<sup>th</sup> January to 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020 indicated that all Covid-19

tests turned negative (Chou et al.,2020). The zero positive tests were attributed to adequate training provided to the health workers on the use of PPEs. The personal protective equipment included face shields, boots, protective suits, and isolation gowns. The health workers were also trained on proper hygiene before and after putting on the protective equipment. This study has played a crucial role in emphasizing why the inadequacy of PPEs is a big blow to health care workers in the United States.

PPEs have been in use in hospitals for a long time, but unfortunately, the demand for PPEs worldwide has led to a shortage due to an ineffective supply chain in many hospitals and countries. The inadequacy of PPEs may result in several problems in a hospital setting. Inadequacy may mean that only a few doctors and nurses get access to such equipment, increasing the risk of other health care workers contracting the Covid -19 virus. There are several complications that healthcare workers face due to PPEs. These problems can be solved by creating a communication platform for doctors and nurses to talk about their day-day problems. Secondly, health care workers should be taught how to utilize the resources at hand.

Despite the increased risk, health workers have continued to sacrifice their lives for the wellbeing of others. Tributes have been written to show appreciation for those doctors and nurses who have died in their duty of work. Before I proceed, I wish to thank every single health care worker who has continuously sacrificed for the good of their patients. These health care workers include nurses, doctors, pathologists, paramedics, health care administrators, and not forgetting ambulance drivers (Shechter et al., 4). Apart from worrying about the increased risk of infection, health care workers also face other challenges. These problems include fear of infecting their family members. Increased risk mainly due to inadequate protective equipment and fatigue due to long working hours attributed to an increase in Covid 19 patients. Moreover, frontline

healthcare workers experience anxiety due to the pressure that comes with being a healthcare worker at such a time.

Some of the lessons learned from this sacrifice are that the best way to appreciate health workers for their sacrificial role is to provide an efficient medical environment to provide services without fear of risks. Most importantly, the government should ensure that these health workers receive psychological support and financial compensation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), it is crucial that the safety of health workers is prioritized. WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom, said in one of his addresses that the success of any health care system in the world depends on the safety of its health care workers. He further asserted that this pandemic had highlighted the crucial role that health care workers play in saving lives and relieving patient suffering (WHO.2020).

I wish to encourage health workers to feel more motivated to deliver in their respective duty lines because many are being done to change the current situation. For instance, the WHO safety charter seeks to increase the welfare of health workers, especially during this pandemic (WHO,2020). The charter advises the government and those in the private sector to protect health workers in various ways. These ways include protecting them from risks in their line of duty, giving them adequate compensation, and coming up with programs that promote the welfare and safety of health workers. In response to the Covid -19 situation, the government should ensure that PPEs are available, and there is adequate stock in case of depletion. This, together with other safety precautions, will ensure that the interests of healthcare workers are taken care of.

I want to offer my heartfelt congratulatory messages to all health workers who have opted to remain standing in their duty of work despite the risk that faces them. These health workers

have shown commitment, sacrifice, hard work, and good hearts during this pandemic. There has been much pressure in many states in the US due to many issues such as inadequacy of the PPEs and other factors. The situation has become extreme due to looming strikes, but I wish to encourage all health care workers to continue being committed during these challenging times.

I would like to appeal to all healthcare workers to give the government time to provide all the set requirements needed to reduce risk. Many people have contracted Covid-19; most of these are our parents, friends, and relatives. Every day, thousands of Americans die due to this virus. Families are experiencing tough times, especially when a loved one succumbs due to the coronavirus (Shechter et al., 6). Generally, the effects of the coronavirus are devastating, and It is unfortunate that this pandemic has changed our lives drastically. Everyone out here is suffering, and our hope is on our health care workers.

The role played by these professionals cannot be underestimated. The entire world relies on these health workers. As much as it is not easy to understand the feeling of a health care worker during this pandemic, most people are getting more enlightened. The sacrifices that these professionals make for the welfare of all cannot be expressed in words. It is very crucial that we must take note of the priceless value that health workers have in our daily lives. Furthermore, at the end of this pandemic, we will consider health care workers our main heroes in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. I, therefore, wish to appeal to all health care workers to continue working tirelessly to save lives and reduce human suffering. Will you continue being committed during this pandemic, or will you allow people to suffer and die in your absence?

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