



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

December 2, 2022

The Honorable Jay Inslee  
Governor  
State of Washington  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

As we have all reported, parts of the country are currently experiencing a confluence of respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, Influenza (flu), and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), especially among children, and this challenge is increasing strain on our health care and hospital systems. I write today to reinforce that the Biden-Harris Administration stands ready to continue assisting you with resources, supplies, and personnel, as it has throughout our fight against COVID-19.

As we head into the winter months, let me reiterate that there are resources and tools available to you and your team to strengthen your capacity to respond to RSV and other infectious diseases, including flexibilities that have been in place during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). As your federal partner, we stand ready to evaluate any request for federal medical assistance and support – including requests for medical personnel and equipment – working in close coordination with you and local jurisdictions to determine the needs and availability of matching resources.

Of note, the Administration has exercised regulatory flexibilities to help health care providers and suppliers continue to respond to COVID-19. These flexibilities – while critical in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic – can also help address many of the challenges you face during the spread of non-COVID-19 illnesses, including RSV and flu. They remain available to you and health care providers as you all make care available in response to flu, RSV, COVID-19, and other illnesses.

Additional resources are available as well, including nearly \$400 million in funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prepare for and respond to public health threats each year, including flu and other respiratory diseases such as RSV. We also continue to provide information on symptoms and care for RSV, flu, and COVID-19, ways to prevent these illnesses, and updates on ongoing research and epidemiology to help inform what is happening in your state. In addition, we have taken action to monitor the supply chain for critical drugs and devices, working closely with manufacturers and other groups in the supply chain and leveraging all the available tools to ensure adequate availability.

In addition to these resources and tools, over the past month, we have engaged with your office through a meeting hosted by the National Governors Association with CDC Director Rochelle Walensky, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response Dawn O'Connell, and subsequent calls with Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Rachel Levine to share the latest information on RSV and available resources at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

You and your resilient public health officials play a tremendous role in keeping our nation healthy. Thank you for your hard work and dedication as we continue to work together to respond to RSV, flu, COVID-19, and other respiratory illnesses. I look forward to hearing from you regarding how we can best help you and your local jurisdictions.

Sincerely,



Xavier Becerra

Enclosure