



560 W. Lake St. 312.440.4300  
Sixth Floor Fax: 312.440.0559  
Chicago, IL USA Toll-free: 888.243.3368  
60661-6600 agd.org

The Honorable Alex Azar  
Secretary U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

March 3, 2020

Dear Secretary Azar,

During testimony before the Senate, you stated that the Strategic National Stockpile currently has 30 million surgical masks and 12 million respirators in reserves, and that approximately 300 million would be needed. On behalf of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) and its 39,000 members, I am reaching out to express our concern for the availability of surgical masks and respirators, and to respectfully urge you to take any appropriate action to ensure their continued production and availability.

General dentists take many precautions as part of the everyday practice of infection control. In addition to standard precautions, the AGD has advised members to discuss COVID-19 with dental staff and to communicate to patients that standard precautions, in compliance with CDC guidelines, are being followed.

Nonetheless, the emergence of COVID-19 may still impact the health of patients and providers. The availability of surgical masks in healthcare settings will enable general dentists to provide care, maintain the safety of dental practices, while also ensuring that we are doing everything in our power to prevent the spread of infections.

Additionally, I would like to thank you for your swift action expanding access to surgical N95 respirators in healthcare settings through deregulatory action.

The AGD stands ready to assist the Department of Health and Human Services in any way possible, particularly in dealing with the challenges presented by COVID-19. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact AGD Government Relations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Connie L. White, DDS, FAGD'.

Connie L. White, DDS, FAGD  
AGD President