

*Office of the Governor  
State of North Carolina*

*Roy Cooper  
Governor*



*20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-0301*

July 17, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence  
The Honorable Alex Azar  
The Honorable Deborah Birx  
White House Coronavirus Task Force  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20050

Dear Vice President Pence, Secretary Azar and Dr. Birx:

We are writing today to express our concern regarding the sudden announcement on July 13<sup>th</sup> which required drastic and immediate changes to the required data elements and reporting process for all hospitals. We appreciate the need to adapt our reporting processes as the response to this public health crisis evolves, and the importance of ensuring data capture is as efficient as possible for our federal partners. However, the lack of notice, inadequate guidance, and requirement of immediate compliance tied to a threat of losing allocations of Remdesivir, convalescent plasma, and PPE – supplies critical to North Carolina’s COVID-19 response efforts – is deeply troubling.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has been reporting the required hospital data elements to our federal partners on behalf of our hospitals to encourage reporting to the State and to decrease duplications of effort, which over the past months has been a great service for our hospitals. The unexpected changes in requirements this week have resulted in the need to stop this service temporarily, increasing the burden on our hospitals as we work with them to meet the new guidelines. Our State and our hospitals were surprised by this announcement, with less than 24 hours’ notice of the changes, undermining the processes NCDHHS has built in collaboration with our hospital partners since March.

Following the announcement around the new data requirements, our team submitted a request to provide all required elements on behalf of all North Carolina

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hospitals as a statewide number to allow time to adjust our processes to capture information individually by hospital. This request was denied, and we were again advised that our Remdesivir allocation could be impacted by a failure to immediately meet the heightened criteria. Our team then submitted urgent requests for clarification to the HHS Protect help desk in order to advise our hospitals such that they can respond to the data inquiry correctly. We have received no response.

We will continue to work closely with our hospitals to meet these new requirements, but we need your partnership to make this happen. The threat to North Carolina's supply of critical treatments and resources is highly concerning, especially at such a critical moment in our response with cases and hospitalizations increasing in North Carolina. In less than a week North Carolina will run out of our current supply of Remdesivir. As you know, North Carolina hospitals were not allocated any cases of Remdesivir in your shipments this week.

We urge you to reconsider the requirements and timeframe of this data transition, allowing states and hospitals to delay the changes to the reporting requirements announced on Monday for 30 days.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roy Cooper

Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mandy K. Cohen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mandy K. Cohen, MD, MPH

Secretary of Health and Human Services