COVID-19
research update

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio is collecting the latest research so that Ohio policymakers and other stakeholders can make informed decisions on the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. HPIO has also created a Coronavirus (COVID-19) resource page to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for links to the Ohio Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other sources of frequently updated, reputable information.

Lessons learned from Seattle and New York

In an audio interview (NEJM, April 1, 2020), editors of the *New England Journal of Medicine* share lessons learned from New York City and Seattle. They discuss New York as an example of a city with widespread community transmission and Seattle as an example of how infections among vulnerable populations increase demand on the healthcare system. Highlights from the interview include:

- To flatten the curve on hospital demand, focus on reducing the spread of infection in healthcare facilities and other environments with highly vulnerable populations
- Maintain social distancing efforts while working toward faster and more widespread testing and building healthcare capacity
- Policy action may be needed to address healthcare worker shortages

Addressing nursing gaps in treatment of COVID-19

A new report (Johns Hopkins, March 30) outlines recommendations for addressing gaps in nursing staffing for the care of COVID-19 patients. The report also outlines the training and personal protective equipment necessary to keep nurses safe. The report recommends taking aggressive policy and practical actions to surge the nursing workforce while also protecting nurses and other healthcare workers from infection.

New guidance on masking policies in hospital settings

A perspective article (NEJM, April 1) addresses the potential benefits of universal masking, particularly in hospital facilities, to protect against transmission from workers to patients. However, authors caution against over emphasis on masking as a strategy to reduce the spread of infection. The authors write that hospital systems should ensure that, in addition to masking, fundamental infection-control measures are in place. For example, careful screening of patients for symptoms and isolation of patients with potential COVID-19, strict policies for healthcare workers to report symptoms to their employer and enabling workers to practice social distancing in all work-related settings.