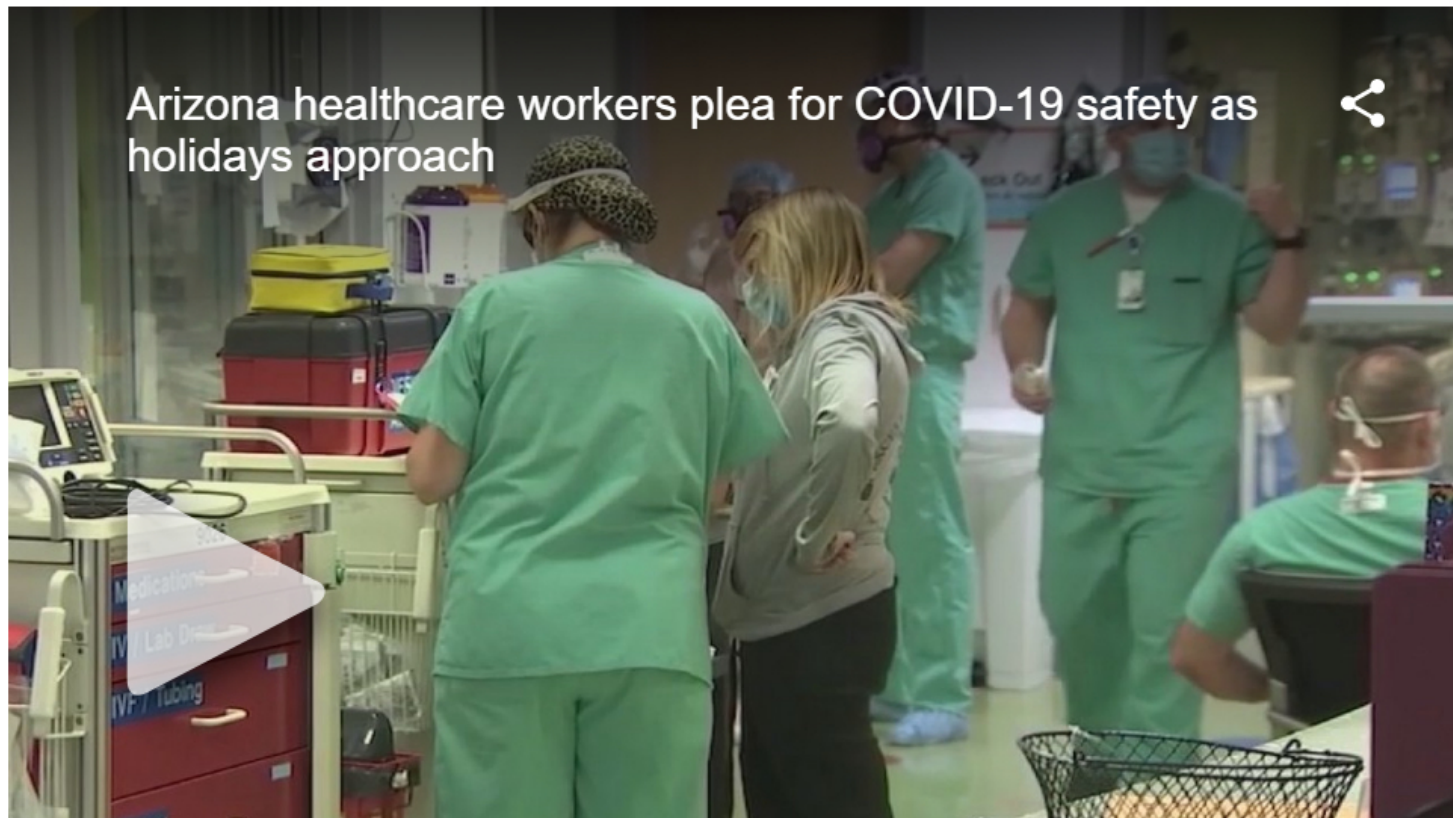


Arizona healthcare workers plea for COVID-19 safety as holidays approach

By Steve Nielsen | Published December 15, 2020 | Coronavirus in Arizona | FOX 10 Phoenix



Arizona healthcare workers plea for COVID-19 safety as holidays approach

Arizona is approaching a crisis standard of care if COVID-19 infections continue to put patients in ICU beds, says state healthcare workers.

PHOENIX - During Arizona's first COVID-19 peak, there was a severe concern hospitals would have to start [crisis standards of care](#), a system where hospitals would have to choose who gets certain care because there aren't enough beds, health care workers or resources.

Inside the walls of ValleyWise Medical Center, there isn't a single available ICU bed, but it says it's not at a crisis standard of care.

"People are getting ICU quality level of care, but in other clinical areas. It's not a decrease in quality at all. It's just in a different area than you would normally see in the hospital," explained Dr. Ross Goldberg with Arizona Medical Association.

Banner Health would not say where its capacity stands on Dec. 15, but said the following to FOX 10 last week, "We expect to 100% capacity on Dec. 15, and 125% capacity on Dec. 18."

Statewide, the Arizona Department of Health Services says beds are available and so far, the crisis standards for

care have not begun.

Dr. Ann-Marie Alameddin with the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association believes it can still be prevented, saying, "We're not there yet and as a system, we hope that we don't get there."

The plea from healthcare workers is to do your part in helping slow the spread of the virus. They say to avoid family gatherings and do everything you can to stop the spread so the state can avoid crisis standards for care.

They say that might mean keeping Christmas just among the people already in your home this year.

As of Dec. 14, there are more than 860 ICU beds in use by COVID-19 patients, [according to the AZDHS website](#). That's 49% of the available ICU beds in Arizona.

For more information on the COVID-19 pandemic in Arizona, [visit this link](#).