

Valleywise reactivates incident command to manage COVID-19 crisis

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Valleywise Health re-activated its Incident Command, a network of hospital leaders, to monitor capacity, levels of care, and PPE supply to prepare for a surge of COVID-19 cases.



Arizona hospitals better prepared to handle another COVID-19 surge

PHOENIX (3TV/CBS 5) - Earlier this year, Valley hospitals were pushed to the brink with the first wave of the coronavirus.



PHOENIX (3TV/CBS 5) -- Valleywise Health Medical Center reactivated its incident command Friday to help monitor hospital resources during the pandemic. As of Friday morning, Valleywise was caring for 32 people infected with COVID-19.

"I would say over the last two weeks we've kind of gotten busier," says charge nurse Jennifer Granger.

Granger works in what used to be the pediatric emergency department. It's now fitted with special equipment, converting each room into negative pressure rooms making the entire unit safer to treat COVID-19 patients. Three units in the hospital have been modified for COVID-19 patients.

The Valleywise incident command is described as a network of leaders monitoring factors like hospital capacity, levels of care, and PPE supplies.

Chief Medical Officer, Michael White, says the hospital stepped down incident command in late August, but with hospitalizations rising, they activated it again.

"We're starting to see an increase in the number day over day," says Dr. Michael White, Chief Medical Officer.

White says staff learned important lessons during the last spike, which will help them handle a second surge. He says more is known about the virus and how it affects the body.

Now healthcare workers are preparing for long days and the emotional toll of this deadly virus.

"I'm ok with no breaks and any of that kind of stuff," says Granger. "But to have to tell a family member that their loved one's going to do and that they can't be present when that happens is, that's awful."