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Amid PPE Shortage, GHC-SCW Provider Builds Desktop Droplet Barrier to Protect Staff During COVID-19 Testing

MADISON, WIS. – March 25, 2020 – The shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers continues to cause concern for health care organizations across the country. It has meant many sleepless nights for Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin (GHC-SCW) Chief of Staff and practicing pediatrician, Dr. Alison Craig.

"I couldn't just stand by and do nothing," said Alison Craig, MD. "Since we have outpatient clinics, we are considered low-priority for receiving PPE. We have to get creative in how we protect ourselves when delivering care to our members because we have no idea when and how many masks and gowns will come our way."

After some online research and innovative thinking, Dr. Craig came up with an idea to build a desktop droplet barrier made out of some everyday items like plexiglass, light fixture rings, cast protector sleeves and a utility cart. She quickly enlisted the help of fellow team members to build a prototype.

After posting a video of the prototype on [YouTube](#), which has received thousands of comments, views and shares to other social media platforms, Dr. Craig connected with area volunteers that could not only help build replicas but also make improvements. On Saturday, [Brownmed](#), a medical supply company from Iowa, sent Dr. Craig a better sleeve option to replace the one she used in the prototype. Then, a Madison area co-op of volunteer engineers worked on Sunday to build replicas of the barrier, delivering nine to GHC-SCW Monday morning.

"The response truly humbles me," commented Dr. Craig. "We hope to spark innovation. This moment in history found us. As health care providers, we have no choice but to rise and face the challenge together."

"Dr. Craig embodies our common values, especially innovation, exemplified in the ingenuity she exhibited in thinking outside the box on how to deliver the best patient care," said Mark Huth, MD, GHC-SCW Chief Executive Officer. "Together, with our facilities team and community volunteers, we were able to bring an idea to fruition in less than a week. It is a great example of how we, as a health care provider and community, are truly better together."

A detailed plan [on how to build a desktop droplet barrier is available online](#) to anyone who wants to build their own or enlist the help of engineers to mass-produce it. GHC-SCW hopes to distribute the desktop droplet barriers to some of their outpatient clinics and urgent care locations in Madison this week.

About GHC-SCW

Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin (GHC-SCW) is a nonprofit health plan that cares for more than 75,000 members. The Cooperative has served the greater Dane County area for 44 years and provides both insurance and clinical services for its members. GHC-SCW is the first health plan in Wisconsin to offer patients a money-back guarantee if they are not satisfied with their experience at a GHC-SCW clinic. GHC-SCW was rated 5 out of 5 nationally in 2019 and was the number one ranked private plan in Wisconsin from 2006–2019 according to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

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