



## Displays of Hope

Loring departments have put together a number of amazing displays throughout the hospital over the past several weeks to spread joy and hope. We commend healthcare professionals and essential workers throughout the country who are on the front line every day to help fight the spread of COVID-19. We're all in this together!



## Effective, Unified Loring Team Rises to the COVID-19 Challenge

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has presented Loring Hospital with a number of unique and unprecedented challenges over the past several weeks, it has also brought the hospital together in more ways than one to work as an effective and unified team. Loring Hospital medical professionals and staff have united like never before, rising up to the challenges without hesitation.

Soon after the COVID-19 pandemic started gaining rapid national momentum in early March, the hospital spurred into action and implemented its Incident Command team to predict and respond to all possible scenarios related to the pandemic.

"Although everyone's lifestyles and work schedules have been thrown up in the air, the entire Loring team has been willing and receptive to rolling with the punches and taking one day at a time," said Stacy Johnson, chief executive officer, chief financial officer and incident commander at Loring Hospital. "It's been amazing to see real teamwork at play when everything else is causing so much anxiety during this time."

### Loring's quick response to the pandemic

Following direction from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Loring Hospital moved swiftly to proactively protect patients, staff and the community. One of the first measures the hospital executed was alternative entrances where everyone is screened upon entry for fever and respiratory symptoms. The hospital also adapted workflows, reserved rooms specifically for respiratory testing purposes, and designated waiting rooms for healthy and sick patients. Most recently, the hospital implemented a no-visitor policy and a universal masking requirement.

"When you start to get anxious about being in a pandemic, you focus on 'What can you do to effectively prepare?' And we have done that well," said Kara Wellington, chief clinical officer and operations chief. "Each week that goes along, we add another layer to the preparation."

As of the time of this publication, there have been seven confirmed COVID-19 cases in Sac County. Though Loring Hospital has not yet had an influx of COVID-19 patients, all members of the Incident Command team feel the hospital as a whole is prepared to handle such a situation.

"I really feel that we're ready for whatever may come our way," said Becky Pontious, human resources director and liaison officer. "That's a good, calming feeling to have."

Daily COVID-19 huddles were also immediately put into place to keep up with the ever-changing information and to encourage open communication between all staff.

"Open and frequent communication has been key," said Wellington. "It provides a level of comfort and encourages staff to offer input and be a part of the decision-making process."

### Teamwork and cross-training

In mid-March, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds expanded the state's public health emergency proclamation, halting non-essential and elective surgical procedures and treatments. This decision put Loring Hospital's Labor Pool into motion, which is an initiative that was started to ensure all employees continue to receive pay amid the national crisis. The Labor Pool reorganizes employees in departments that have slowed so they can help out in other ways, while making sure staff is staggered so, if the pandemic strikes at Loring Hospital, not everyone is exposed at the same time.

"Everybody's got each other's backs," said Amy von Glan, rehab tech and leader of the Labor Pool. "They understand that, yes, you may have to do something out of your comfort zone. They also know it's not going to last forever."



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# A Big Thanks to Our Community for All Your Support

We are so thankful for the outpouring of support and generosity from our amazing community and friends! Over the past several weeks, Loring Hospital has been the recipient of numerous acts of kindness and personal protective equipment (PPE) donations.

For more information about donating PPE to fight against the spread of COVID-19, please visit [loringhospital.org/covid-19](http://loringhospital.org/covid-19). You may also contact Teresa Wirtjers at 712-662-6419 or [twirtjers@loringhosp.org](mailto:twirtjers@loringhosp.org).

Loring Hospital is currently accepting PPE donations, including the following items:

- Homemade cloth masks
- Disposable gloves
- Safety goggles
- Surgical masks
- N95 masks
- Face shields
- Splash shields
- Gowns



Russ Davis, local farmer and member of the Loring Hospital Board of Directors, donated a face splash shield from his farm to the hospital.



Donations have included homemade cloth masks, N95 masks, mask ear savers, face shields, gowns, food and much more.



East Sac County Community Schools teachers and friends delivered Loring Hospital and UnityPoint Clinic staff a delicious homemade lunch.



Here's a look at some of the homemade cloth face masks Loring Hospital has received.



Dr. Lance Jenkins of Jenkins Chiropractic in Sac City donated 50 3D-printed face shields and dozens of face mask ear savers.



Iowa Central Community College manufactured and donated 60 face shields to Loring Hospital.

## Foundation Golf Tournament Cancelled Due to COVID-19

### YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

We'd like to sincerely thank all our sponsors, supporters and friends who were looking forward to this year's Loring Healthcare Foundation Golf Tournament. We look forward to having everyone join us in 2021 for an even bigger event!

While we were sorely disappointed at not being able to hold our biggest fundraiser event of the year, we are hopeful you will find it within your means to make a donation to the Loring Healthcare Foundation.

Funds raised through the Foundation are used to serve as Loring Hospital's base for equipment, services, programs, construction projects and more. The devotion and ongoing support of generous donors like you make many of Loring Hospital's accomplishments possible. Your support makes an immediate impact on our patients and community!

#### A tax-deductible donation can be mailed to:

The Loring Healthcare Foundation  
211 Highland Avenue  
Sac City, Iowa, 50583

## Have Fun While Staying Safe This Summer

This summer is probably going to look different than summers past. But that doesn't mean you can't slather on some sunscreen and safely enjoy the great outdoors.

In fact, fresh air, sunshine and physical activity are important to keep your mind and body healthy. Get out and play some lawn games with your quarantined family, start a garden or go for a bike ride or walk – as long as you're social distancing.

#### Have kids with cabin fever?

Do a scavenger hunt in the yard or neighborhood, set up an obstacle course, visit worldwide museums or parks virtually... the options are endless!



If a park, beach or recreational facility is open for public use, visiting is okay as long as you practice social distancing and everyday steps such as washing hands often and covering coughs and sneezes. Even as we start to see an ease in restrictions, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests:

- Staying at least six feet from others at all times. This might make some open areas, trails and paths better to use. Do not go into a crowded area.
- Avoiding gatherings with others outside of your household.
- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Bringing hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to use if soap and water are not available.

Wishing you a safe *and* fun summer!



# In Their Own Words

While the COVID-19 pandemic has caused change and uncertainty, it has also brought our hospital together in more ways than one. We asked our Loring Hospital team members to share their responses to the following:

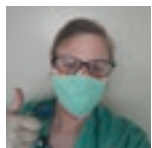
*What makes you particularly proud to be a Loring Hospital employee and/or a member of the healthcare industry during this unprecedented time?*



"Loring Hospital is taking the necessary measures we need to ensure the safety and well-being of not only our patients but our staff as well. The way we care for and reassure our patients during this trying time is second to none. I am extremely proud and prideful to be an employee for Loring Hospital." – **Jessica Badertscher, RN**



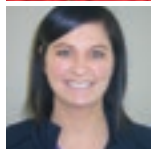
"I am so incredibly proud of how our Loring family has handled adapting to constant change over the past month related to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm inspired each week by our leaders working hard to keep us safe at work and every day by my teammates who continue to show up and handle each change with grace. Teamwork has never been stronger, and I've never felt more blessed to work at Loring Hospital." – **Jill Williams, Registered Dietitian & Diabetes Education Coordinator**



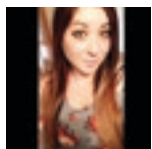
"I am proud that Loring is in such a generous and caring community! The support from the communities that we serve – through donated PPE, meals provided and just words of encouragement – warms my heart! Just one of many perks working at a rural hospital...the personal relationships we have with our communities!" – **Molly Sporrer, RN**



"I really appreciate what Loring is doing to take care of the staff during this time and that we are doing what is best for both our patients and staff." – **Crystal Remmick, Lab Manager, MLT**



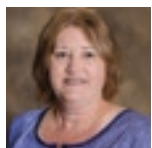
"I just want to commend everyone's efforts in preparation for the pandemic. Our administration has been very proactive, and it really shows that they value the health and safety of both the hospital staff as well as the public we are serving! Proud to be part of the Loring Team!" – **Tiffany Cress, Respiratory Therapy Manager**



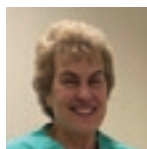
"I am proud to be in a position to help serve my hospital and my community. I'm grateful that the community has been supportive of the hospital during these times and understanding of the seemingly endless changes we have had to make due to COVID. One thing that hasn't changed is the amount we care, and the compassion we serve each and every day." – **Ashley Dahlberg, Education Coordinator, RN**



"We have a lot of very knowledgeable and caring staff. They are all informed with the latest information and are ready for what comes at us. Everyone has come together to work as one unified team, and that makes me proud. Well done, Loring Team!" – **Amy von Glan, Rehab Tech**



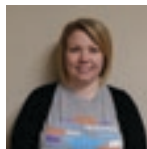
"I am proud to be a part of a team that has come together to serve our hospital and our community. Employees have stepped up to the plate by sharing ideas and working in different areas as needed. We really are in this together, as a facility, community and family." – **Becky Pontious, Human Resources Director**



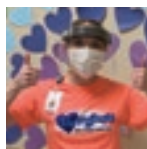
"I'm proud to help out in any way I can to get us through these trying times." – **Kim Borkowski, Central Processing Tech**



"We are a small, critical access hospital, but we are doing BIG things! Our leadership does a great job at keeping us informed. Our team is working together as a well-oiled machine with new materials, new protocols and new workflows." – **Kalyn Johnson, RN**



"I'm proud to be a Loring employee because I feel that everyone here has been supportive in making sure that we as nurses are taken care of mentally. We have a super supportive management staff, and they are always willing to help on the floor with patients, answer any of our questions and make sure we have resources available! I also feel like we have a great and supportive team in general and love working for Loring." – **Cassie Bednarik, RN**



"While other hospitals and healthcare entities are doing a variety of things with employees to save money (sending people home, forcing use of vacation time, furloughs, etc.), Loring administration is doing everything they can to keep employees working! I feel very ahead of the game with our PPE and measures we have put in place to protect our patients and ourselves." – **Colleen Auen, Occupational Therapist**



"I love the teamwork that is highly evident here. The pandemic has 'raised the bar' so to speak on the level at which we depend on each other. I feel it is all-encompassing in all the departments. We are a family, and it shows." – **Joani Boger, CNA/Unit Clerk**



"Our Food Service staff has started making meals for employees to take home for themselves and their families. We have made casseroles, pizzas, homemade breads, sweets such as cookies and bars, more grab-and-go items, snacks and breakfast burritos. This is our way of helping employees out to alleviate any pressure that they are under." – **Nancy Meusburger, Food Service Manager**



"I am proud to work with a group of employees you can call a real team. It's not that I have to go to work; I WANT to go to work!" – **Becky Leonard-Shull, Phlebotomist**



"I am proud to be a Loring Hospital nurse because Loring Hospital has always been known for its exceptional care, and I'm proud to be a part of that care." – **Alexis Betten, Nurse Manager, RN**



"The dedication of all Loring employees helps keep the hospital running during this difficult time. I'm proud to be part of a workplace with people who give their all and do it with excellent service and compassion." – **Luisa Ching, Physical Therapist**

## Phasing in Services

In early May, Loring Hospital began a phased-in approach to resuming non-emergent and elective surgeries and procedures after temporarily suspending services due to COVID-19. We look forward to returning back to normal operations while continuing to keep the health and safety of all top of mind! Please continue to check out our Facebook page and website for updates and information.

Loring Hospital



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and that this is a difficult time for everybody."

"It excites me to see how so many employees have stepped up and taken on new responsibilities," added Kathy Winchester, materials management and logistics officer. "It has challenged our hospital and shown some very shining stars."

### Finding light in a stressful situation

Hospital employees are also making the most of the pandemic by finding ways to brighten each other's days. From departments creating colorful displays throughout the hospital to an all-staff pizza lunch, an organized game room and a happy hour complete with appetizers and "mocktails," everyone is working to find light in a stressful situation.

"Everyone has stepped up in some way or another to help boost morale," said Pontious.

### Loring and our community – working together

Nicole Wiggins, infection preventionist and planning chief, says though the hospital has a "good supply" of personal protective equipment, she and everyone else at Loring have been blown away by the community's outpouring of donations and support.

"The community has helped us out a great deal with homemade mask donations, gowns, food and other items," she said. "We're all very grateful."

The pandemic has also strengthened relationships between Loring Hospital and other area healthcare facilities, including affiliate hospitals, nursing homes, Sac County Public Health, Emergency Medical Services and Sac County Emergency Management.

"We've come together to work as a team for our entire community," said Wellington. "We've exchanged valuable information, skills and good conversations between one another."

### Steps going forward

In early May, in response to new guidelines presented by Governor Reynolds, Loring Hospital started phasing in non-emergent and elective procedures while keeping the health and safety of all top of mind.

"We are looking forward to increasing service access in a responsible way," said Johnson. "As some elective procedures are resumed, an emphasis will be on continuing to keep precautions in place to protect our patients, staff and community."

The entire Incident Command team is confident in Loring Hospital's strategy to return to normal operations and its continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even as Iowa continues to open back up, the team stresses the importance of continuing to follow CDC and IDPH guidelines.

"Reinforcing social distancing and respecting and following the measures that are put in place continue to be very important," said Wiggins. "It not only helps those of us at the hospital but everyone in Sac County."

Although there are still a number of uncertainties that lie ahead, the team remains optimistic and chooses to find the silver linings in the situation.

"I think it's important to focus on the positive things this experience has given us, such as more concentrated family time, rather than the things it has taken from us," said Wellington.

Wiggins added, "We've all been forced to slow down a bit, which is something we can all benefit from."