

VA



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VA mobilizes 3D printing resources nationwide to fight COVID-19

WASHINGTON – In an effort to help meet the growing demand, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) activated its 3D printing network in late March, to test 3D designs of medical equipment used by the nation’s health care providers to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

VA is teaming with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institute of Health (NIH) and innovators across the globe using 3D printing technology to prototype medical supplies, including customized personal protective equipment (PPE) like face shields, masks and ventilators.

Developing 3D masks and other critical PPE supplies bolsters the nation’s fight against COVID-19. It also supports VA’s “Fourth Mission” to provide back-up assistance to the country’s public and health care systems during times of crisis.

“VA is at the forefront of using 3D printing technology to benefit our patients,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “The collective actions of our partners allow us to bring VA’s medical expertise in 3D printing to the frontline of the fight against COVID-19, helping health care providers and patients stay safe.”

Through this initiative, VA’s [Innovation Ecosystem](#), the [NIH 3D Print Exchange](#) and [FDA 3D Medical Device Initiatives](#) are leveraging medical knowledge, with public health and safety expertise, while also validating the efficacy of 3D products. In parallel, [America Makes](#) will engage manufacturers willing to 3D print for hospitals across the country to bring production to scale and meet unprecedented demand.

VA’s 3D printing initiative, based at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System, grew out of the efforts of local VA clinical innovators and now includes 33 sites exploring a wide range of clinical applications. This includes pre-surgical planning, orthotics and prosthetics, assistive technology, dental applications, bioprinting and now rapid prototyping and testing in response to COVID-19.

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