

## Using Reusable Respirators as a Primary Choice Talking Points for Managers

### Why we are reinforcing the use of reusable respirators

- The pandemic is ongoing and while the supply chain has improved, it is still not reliable.
- While disposable N95s are currently available for purchase, they are often in a variety of brands and may not be the same as those that staff at BILH have been fit tested to. Although we fit tested staff to a second disposable brand, even those non-3M disposable brands are difficult to purchase at times in the numbers that we need.
- BILH has a large number of employees and physicians. Regular, repeated fit testing activities to cycle through a variety of brands of respirators is not realistic, especially while we are building a large-scale vaccination program for our patients.
- Staff in sterile environments may not wear current reusable respirators per guidance from the CDC and NIOSH due to the presence of an exhalation valve. However, reusable respirators may be used in non-sterile environments if covered with a surgical mask.
- Disposable respirators can only be used for one shift per day per guidance from the MA DPH, which means conservation is a vital part of our PPE strategy.
- A single reusable respirator may conserve hundreds of disposable N95 respirators.
- Using our reusable and disposable respirators strategically where they are best suited to patient and staff safety helps BILH continue to maintain and build our supply of respirators that will be critical if another surge occurs or if the supply chain become more unstable.
- CDC supports the use of reusable respirators during a times of increased demand, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic and is currently evaluating whether they can be an ongoing component of respiratory protection even post-pandemic.

### What we are asking staff to do

- If you were fit tested for a reusable respirator, begin using it right away and make it your first choice in situations where a respirator is required.
- The envo<sup>®</sup>mask filter should be changed out on a daily basis to match the frequency of disposable respirator changes. Please see [BILH Respirator Service Life by Respirator Type](#) for details.