

Our Post-Pandemic Healthcare World

I definitely view our future post-pandemic world through the lens of someone who has worked many decades in health care.

Though the pandemic has been a time of incredible stress for healthcare workers, for me I guess it is possible to identify two positives.

The first is the extent to which staff who work in healthcare settings have so obviously provided exemplary care even when faced with PPE shortages, heartbreaking patient losses, and sporadic public resistance to masks and vaccines. As a RN in an administrative position at a Federally Qualified Health Center, I don't work on the front lines myself, but I'm close enough to feel that I'm a part of the collective healthcare effort. Our clinic is affiliated with UCLA and we had - for example – a Dental Hygiene staff member deployed to assist in the MICU at Ronald Reagan UCLA. Right in the middle of COVID and she did so willingly. I work with inspiring people in an invigorating and purposeful setting. What a gift.

The second positive is more clinical and pragmatic – the COVID pandemic has likely led to lasting infection control practice changes that were sorely needed. When I first started nursing school in the late 70's, we would do all types of patient care without gloves and routinely had extensive exposure to blood and body fluids. The AIDS crisis resulted in permanent and necessary infection control changes. I've always felt that ambulatory care settings lacked adequate precautions when it came to diseases with the potential for respiratory transmission. Well, everyone understands screening and masking now. This is a positive that will result in a safer environment for patients and staff going forward.

So, amazed at the extent to which healthcare workers have delivered every step of the way during the pandemic. Proud to be a Nurse. Happy that we all have a better understanding of respiratory precautions. These are my positive takeaways from COVID thus far.

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