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**West Virginia Hospital Association Embarks on New Collaboration with PPE.Exchange, a Global Online Vendor and Validated Source for Acquiring Personal Protective Equipment**

*All West Virginia healthcare providers, associations, government entities, educational institutions, and others needing to protect employees, visitors, patients, and students can benefit.*

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As part of its ongoing effort to address personal protective equipment (PPE) supply chain challenges exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the West Virginia Hospital Association (WVHA) identified PPE.Exchange [www.ppe.exchange](http://www.ppe.exchange), a Seattle based tech company that operates a global, online marketplace to connect health care providers and other organizations with vetted suppliers of personal protective equipment and testing. This new arrangement is being facilitated through the West Virginia Health Services, Inc. to assist healthcare providers, businesses, and other West Virginia organizations in obtaining the PPE needed to protect staff, patients, students, customers, and others during the pandemic.

“The interruption of traditional supply chains for PPE was one of the many serious complications associated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic this year,” said West Virginia Hospital Association President and CEO, Jim Kaufman. “This impacted healthcare providers greatly. Through this exciting new arrangement, West Virginians

will have a new source for acquiring PPE supplies from vetted vendors through PPE.Exchange.”

PPE.Exchange is a digital marketplace that connects PPE purchasers with a network of more than one thousand verified vendors, suppliers, and manufacturers while protecting customers by setting industry standards for PPE quality and vendor verification. With integration to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) database through the Open FDA portal, compliance and product certification are validated and recorded in real-time on the secure PPE.Exchange encrypted blockchain. PPE.Exchange platform users have access to a variety of certified PPE and medical supplies and the ability to compare product features such as price, minimum order quantities, certifications, and more. This user-friendly platform, which is free to access, enables customers to easily place orders through a secure check out process that incorporates a built-in escrow and smart contract system.

“It became clear early in the COVID-19 pandemic that many organizations struggled to identify alternate sources for PPE when traditional supply chains were unable to meet consumer demand,” said PPE.Exchange co-founder JT Garwood. “We created PPE.Exchange to address the major challenge of vetting new suppliers and providing transparency to the process of obtaining PPE supplies. Our primary goal with PPE.Exchange is to provide a customer-friendly, secure tool to help organizations across industries procure the supplies they need to protect their workforce.”

Through this arrangement, WVHA will work with PPE.Exchange to market the platform to healthcare providers, colleges and universities, large and small employers, and other businesses and organizations that need PPE to protect their workforce, patients, and customers. One major advantage of PPE.Exchange is the ability for small organizations to participate in collaborative purchases to help organizations achieve the scale necessary to purchase PPE amid increasing demand. Interested organizations can also purchase directly through the platform at any time. This includes organizations such as assisted living facilities, dental practices, government entities, educational institutions and other organizations that need supplies to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

Any organization interested in learning more about PPE.Exchange and purchasing supplies is strongly encouraged to contact the WVHA team to learn more.

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West Virginia Hospital Association (WVHA) [www.wvha.org](http://www.wvha.org) is a not-for-profit statewide organization representing 59 hospitals and health systems across the continuum of care. The WVHA was founded in 1925 to serve as the collective voice of the state’s hospital community. Today, the mission of the WVHA is to support its members in achieving a strong, healthy West Virginia. Members of the Association envision a strong healthcare system that supports optimizing the health status of West Virginians served by hospitals and improving the economic condition of the state. The values of quality, transparency, integrity, collaboration and innovation guide the actions of the Association so that member hospitals and health systems can provide high-quality, affordable, accessible healthcare for West Virginia families and communities. The

Association is proud to be a part of the state's hospital industry, adding value to the health and wellness of West Virginians. In addition to representing hospitals and health systems, the WVHA includes associate member organizations that partner with West Virginia's hospitals.

PPE.Exchange [www.ppe.exchange](http://www.ppe.exchange) is a technology startup aimed at solving pandemic driven issues at the highest level. PPE.Exchange's technology enables the discovery and verification of more than 1,000 PPE vendors. Due to its vendor network and data, PPE.Exchange seamlessly provides solutions to organizations and promotes supply chain transparency. PPE.Exchange supplies more than 1,400 organizations with the equipment they need most. Read more about PPE.Exchange by visiting PPE.Exchange's LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ppeexchange/> and Newsroom <https://ppe.exchange/news>

West Virginia Health Services is a wholly owned subsidiary of the West Virginia Hospital Association, Inc., and it delivers an array of products and services to help West Virginia healthcare providers improve their clinical, financial and operational performance.