Setting Up an Incident Command Center to Focus Your COVID-19 Response

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Summary/Key Points:

Create a split flow model
- Use low threshold, expansive criteria to separate COVID population
  - Develop criteria to separate influenza-like syndrome from suspected COVID
  - Consider comorbidities of patients
  - Number of symptoms individual has
  - Any needs for specialized respiratory equipment
- Separate out staff to manage COVID area vs non-COVID area
  - This reduces the risk of contamination from donning and doffing PPE
  - This protects patients who are COVID negative
  - This protects staff members and providers
  - This helps conserve PPE as well
- Incident command on ground that knows how to manage policies and protocols
  - Incident command should be at departmental level
  - In charge of monitoring and managing PPE needs of the department
  - Ensure the smooth flow of the department
  - Explore means to convert areas for COVID patient management
  - Provide training on PPE management and training on testing criteria
  - Allocates tasks to each person on department
- Set up alternate testing area for people to get tested
  - Especially important to reduce volume in the ED
  - Siphon off people coming in from primary care providers
  - Preserves PPE and allows for better testing flow
- Develop a testing algorithm
  - Prioritize individuals with high-risks of exposure
  - Prioritize individuals with several comorbidities
Value of Tent Set up
- Expands capacity
- Allows for quick testing
- Ventilatory requirement (exploit natural air circulation)

Other considerations
- Have a tiered response to PPE
  - What PPE is required for various procedures
    - E.g. Aerosolized procedures
  - Use of devices to prevent secretions (e.g. intubation boxes)
  - Provide patients with masks to limit secretion transfer
- Provide training in proper donning and doffing of PPE
- Reminder to maintain social distancing among other providers and colleagues

Online resources:
- WHO case definitions
- COVID-19 surge capacity guide
- PPE requirements
- Estimated PPE needs