Task Force on COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections: Prevention and Preparedness, Resilience and Recovery

Overview
The International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) is standing up a Task Force on COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections: Prevention and Preparedness, Resilience and Recovery, tapping the global expertise of key leaders and experts from around the world to focus on the critical role buildings, businesses and communities play in the face of this outbreak of COVID-19 and disease prevention more broadly. The Task Force will launch in early April.

Task Force Chairs
The Task Force will be chaired by renowned experts and populated by a diverse group of thought leaders and authorities from across public health, medicine, design, real estate, government and academia. To date, the co-chairs include:

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., MBA, former president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Distinguished Professor of Population Health and Health Equity at the University of Pennsylvania;

Jonathan Fielding, M.D, MPH, MA, MBA, Distinguished Professor at UCLA in the Fielding School of Public Health and the Geffen School of Medicine and former director and health officer of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health;

Richard Carmona, M.D., MPH, FACS, who was 17th Surgeon General of the United States and is presently Distinguished Professor at the University of Arizona;

Joseph Allen, DSc, MPH, assistant professor of exposure and assessment science and director of the Healthy Buildings program at Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health;

Wang Yu, Distinguished Professor at Center for Healthy Cities, Institute for China Sustainable Urbanization, Tsinghua University; Former Director-General of Chinese Center for Disease Control & Prevention;

Gong Peng, Professor and Director of Center for Healthy Cities, Institute for China Sustainable Urbanization, Tsinghua University; and,

Dr. Raymond Yau, General Manager, Technical Services & Sustainable Development, Swire Properties Limited.
Objectives
The aim of the Task Force is twofold: First, to identify and develop a set of signature deliverables and resources, including guidelines for individuals, businesses and communities to help them better integrate actionable insights and proven strategies into how they manage both their buildings and their organizations. Second, the Task Force will assess ways in which the WELL Building Standard (WELL) itself can be further strengthened so the system, which touches more than a half-billion square feet of space across 58 countries, can better support prevention and preparedness, resiliency and recovery in this critical moment and into the future.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Task Force on COVID-19?
The Task Force is a group of global experts convened by IWBI that will work together in a month-long sprint to discuss, elevate and brainstorm ways that buildings, businesses and communities can contribute to prevention and preparedness, resilience and recovery in response to public health crises like the one we find ourselves in today.

What will the Task Force accomplish?
The Task Force members will provide expertise on evidence, strategies and interventions that IWBI may use to inform:
1. New resources, including guidelines for prevention and preparedness, resilience and recovery
2. Enhancements to the WELL Building Standard as well as the WELL Community Standard and other IWBI offerings

Who should join the Task Force?
We invite experts in air quality, research, risk management, resiliency, virology, epidemiology, hygiene, facilities management, building forensics, sustainability, workplace wellness, ergonomics, psychology, design and architecture, engineering and any other areas of expertise related to prevention and preparedness, resiliency and recovery. We hope to see broad cross-sector participation from public health, real-estate, healthcare, business, non-profit, government and academia.

What is the time commitment for the Task Force?
There is no minimum time commitment for Task Force members. We understand that many experts currently on the front lines may not have much time to spare. The online platform will be open 24/7 and Task Force members can log in and dedicate as much time and expertise as they wish. There will also be two optional online convenings in which Task Force members can participate.

How do I join the Task Force?
Please reach out to us to get involved with the Task Force or to nominate someone else.

Once you’ve reached out to us, you can expect to hear back from our team within 2-3 business days.

How will the Task Force provide their expertise?
The Task Force members will provide their expertise through a digital community platform and online convenings.
Is there a limit to the number of Task Force participants?
We can accommodate all the qualified experts who volunteer for the Task Force thanks to the platform we are deploying to support dialogue and discourse amongst Task Force members.

How else is IWBI supporting the community in response to the Coronavirus?
We have activated our entire team to support in every way we know how. Beyond setting up the Task Force, which will be developing new resources for the entire community, we are hosting a series of webcasts on various topics, including best practices for working from home and organizational strategies for being prepared. We are offering a free WELL AP exam prep course. We’re providing more articles focused on tips you can use to stay safe and to become more resilient and we’re making those and other resources more accessible across our social media channels. Sign up for our newsletter to stay on top of the changing landscape and check out placesmatter.com for ongoing information and resources that will keep you up-to-date.