

Hospitals in Houston, Austin, Dallas, San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley are struggling to keep up with the constant and growing flow of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. And many hospitals are reaching full capacity while making preparations on how to treat an overflow of patients.

"It's no different than any of the urban centers in Texas," [said](#) San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg on Monday. "We're seeing hospitalizations increase and accelerate to the point where we're now in single digits in capacity with hospital beds, ICUs and ventilators."

Three weeks ago, Houston found itself in this very spot when the Texas Medical Center reported that it was completely full. Since then, Houston hospitals have been forced to get creative, resorting to unconventional ways to make space for these patients.

Houston Methodist Hospital, for example, hired traveling nurses and converted facilities originally designed for totally separate purposes into ICU units.

Many other parts of the state are starting to make similar decisions. Austin plans to [open a pop-up field hospital](#) next week. Hospitals in Dallas [are considering](#) adding multiple patients to a room and also converting recovery areas for elective procedures to house COVID-19 patients.

With Texas hospitals spread so thin, a host of emergency measures, including outside resources, are the new normal.

The [U.S. military has sent](#) medical staff to the state's biggest hotspots. Gov. Greg Abbott recently announced the state will be working with the Department of Defense to house patients in hotels in the Rio Grande Valley.

Abbott also [expanded the suspension](#) of elective surgeries that take up ICU space to more than 100 counties.

However, Abbott hasn't issued a new statewide stay-at-home order, although several city and county leaders [are asking Abbott](#) to give that power to local authorities.

On Monday, Cameron County Judge Eddie Treviño Jr. in Brownsville said that he's considering a lockdown without the Governor's OK.