

Contribute to open source healthcare projects for COVID-19

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Many of those that are familiar with the maker movement, including me, believe there is a significant opportunity to apply open source design principles and mass-scale collaborative distributed manufacturing technologies (like open source 3D printing) to at least partially overcome medical supply shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic. Already, an Italian hospital saved COVID-19 patients' lives by 3D printing valves for reanimation devices.

However, those designs were not open source, and hospitals still need to file paperwork to get to the STLs, needlessly wasting time, restricting the number of volunteers that could print the valves, and perhaps leading to unnecessary deaths. Far more beneficial would be a free source of vetted digital designs that anyone with access to equipment could fabricate for their local hospitals. Ideally, these designs would follow good open source design procedures. We are well aware of risks and shortcomings to this approach, and that those used to the standard model may not understand how fast technological development is in the open source community.

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