



COVID-19: Urgent Updates on Progress to Arm FPs for Pandemic AAFP Throwing Full Weight Behind Securing Supplies and Information

March 19, 2020

Dear colleagues,

While family physicians are risking their own health and sacrificing time with loved ones to serve on the front lines of this unprecedented health emergency, know that the AAFP is throwing the full weight of the organization behind making sure you get everything you need to protect your patients and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're putting [daily updates on a dedicated webpage](#) so you don't have to sift through the flood of news yourself. Bookmark it and check back every day.

The Academy has been fiercely advocating on your behalf. Some of those efforts are finally bearing fruit, and we are seeing [progress on other fronts](#). You will hear more from me on that, but for now, a quick update:

Supplies

- Yesterday we met with President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence to deliver the message loud and clear that family physicians need a reliable supply of personal protective equipment so we can stay healthy enough to serve our communities. They said the administration is leveraging its full authority under the Defense Production Act to accelerate production of the supplies we need.
- We are banging on doors — both as your Academy and together with other organizations — to get you testing kits so you can triage patients.

Payment

- Congress and the administration have heeded our call for Medicare to compensate you for telehealth services at the same rate as office visits; now we are pressing private payers and Medicaid to do the same.
- Congressional leaders have our list of top policy priorities, including small business financial assistance specifically for physician practices.
- We're telling CMS to pause quality data reporting deadlines.

Education

- We recently launched a [new resource on using telehealth to care for patients during this pandemic](#).
- The upcoming [Emergency and Urgent Care livestreamed course](#) will include a newly added session on emerging infectious conditions and COVID-19.

STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

- The [AAFP Physician Office Preparedness Checklist](#) now addresses more topics.
- [Familydoctor.org](#) has four new articles on COVID-19 that you can share with your patients, who are desperate for reliable information.

In addition, the Society of Critical Care Medicine has launched a [free series of videos addressing critical care for non-ICU clinicians](#) that family physicians may be interested in.

And you will always find the most comprehensive and timely information that's tailored to family physicians on the [AAFP's COVID-19 resource page](#).

Thank you for your tireless service to your patients and communities. With the Academy behind us, we will bring the full force of family medicine to this fight.

Stay well and carry on,

Gary L. LeRoy, MD
President
American Academy of Family Physicians