

COVID-19: How the AMA is supporting physicians on the front lines

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What's the news: Following a week of meaningful strides toward addressing the growing challenges of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), AMA Executive Vice president & CEO James L. Madara, MD outlined the AMA's strategic work to federation members and the AMA House of Delegates.

In the March 19 letter, Dr. Madara begins "The COVID-19 pandemic represents an enormous threat to public health and an extreme challenge to physicians. Now, more than ever, physicians need a powerful ally in patient care." Dr. Madara then proceeded to outline the AMA's COVID-19 response strategy, which serves as a road map for AMA initiatives during this unprecedented pandemic.

Why it's important: To bring focus to the breadth of the AMA's work, Dr. Madara outlines three key areas and highlights of the organization's work to date:

Providing clear, evidence-based guidance

- Established AMA COVID-19 online resource center, Physicians Guide to COVID-19, and a COVID-19 FAQ provides evidence-based perspectives from AMA's physician leaders and subject matter experts to help physicians prepare their practices, address patient concerns, and provide answers to physicians' top questions.
- Curated comprehensive overview of the coronavirus by the *JAMA* Network – including epidemiology, infection control and prevention recommendations – available for free on its JN Learning website.
- Created AMA resources available to physicians to navigate COVID-19 pandemic.

Building an interface with physicians on the front line

- | Facilitated conversations and updates with our Federation partners and AMA Ambassadors.
- | Shared first-hand accounts of physicians on the front lines. Listen to *JAMA* Editor Howard Bauchner, MD interview Maurizio Cecconi, MD in Italy and NIAID's Anthony Fauci, MD; read how the Permanente Medical Group developed new approaches to preserve PPE.
- | Answered questions from physicians on twitter, leveraging ambassadors to engage and spread the word, and will be conducting Twitter chats to answer physician questions and share experiences.
- | Called on the Administration for \$100 billion dollars to support front line health care personnel and providers.

Removing obstacles to diagnosis and treatment

- | Called on Administration to use every lever to address protective equipment (PPE) needs and lack of COVID-19 tests, reinforcing to President Trump that a lack of PPE for health care workers is "unacceptable."
- | Mobilized a dramatic increase in the nation's telemedicine capacity through its advocacy and publication of the Quick Guide to Telemedicine in Practice, a new resource to help physicians implement remote care.
- | Developed new CPT code for coronavirus.
- | Eased restrictions on the use of laboratory developed tests for COVID-19 testing to expand local access.
- | Urged Administration to exercise flexibility in reducing regulatory burdens by allowing physicians to care for Medicare beneficiaries in States other than where they are licensed, waiving enrollment requirements and expediting enrollment, and waiving the requirement for Medicare patients for a 3-day hospitalization prior to covering skilled nursing facility care.
- | Worked with HHS on the development of new recommendations for deferring non-urgent elective procedures that are consistent with recommendations of the American College of Surgeons.

Learn more: Visit the AMA COVID-19 Advocacy Progress Report for a comprehensive view of the AMA's work to team with the essential partners in health care to reach the highest levels of government. The AMA fights for physicians and patients by listening to front line physicians and channeling their collective voices into action.