Doctors: Want to serve in pandemic hot spot? What you must know

APR 17, 2020

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Are you a practicing physician in a state not experiencing a surge of COVID-19 patients and want to take your skills to another state to help in hospitals overwhelmed with patients sick from the coronavirus? Are you a retired physician looking to jump back into the profession to volunteer during the pandemic?

In an effort to help you get your skills to the places where they are needed most, the AMA has created the first-of-its-kind national resource for health professionals seeking to volunteer during the pandemic—the COVID-19 volunteer guide for health professionals. The AMA resource informs physicians and health professionals how and where to volunteer and what to consider before doing so.

The continually updated AMA guide includes a list of the states that have created registration websites for health-professional volunteers.

“Amid widespread concern over the potential for health care workforce shortages during the COVID-19 crisis, physicians are being asked to help mitigate the strain being put upon the U.S. health care system,” said AMA President Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA. “This new AMA guide will be a one-stop resource for physicians who want to help impacted communities across the country. With up-to-date information just a click away, frontline physicians and health care workers will have what they need to tackle the challenges of COVID-19.”

Stay up to speed on the AMA’s COVID-19 advocacy efforts and track the fast-moving pandemic with the AMA’s COVID-19 resource center, which offers a library of the most up-to-date resources from JAMA Network™, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization.

Volunteer resource center


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In addition to telling physicians and other health professionals which states are requesting volunteers, the guide:

- Provides information on organizations that identify and match volunteer physicians with institutions or areas in need.
- Links to resources that guide senior and retired physicians who want to return to work, or who are called upon to do so, during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Shows physicians where they can go to track state executive orders related to licensure, along with details on licensing inactive or retired physicians who wish to become active during the pandemic.
- Connects to resources for medical staffs, including topics such as the emergency system for advanced registration of volunteer health professionals, blanket waivers and more.
- Outlines organizations providing gratis access to data to verify credentials for physician volunteers, including the AMA's Physician Profile service for all state medical licensing boards and eligible state and federal agencies verifying physician credentials in response to COVID-19.
- Links to a snapshot of the national workforce picture that the AMA created using the AMA Physician Masterfile and other authoritative data.

The guide will provide more resources as they become available. For senior physicians looking to volunteer during the COVID-19 crisis, the AMA has created the senior physician COVID-19 resource guide. Here, senior physicians can find resources related to licensure considerations, ways to help without direct patient care, information on professional liability and more.

Read about the six keys for retired physicians considering a return to practice amid the global pandemic.

Learn more with the AMA about the retired doctors who have heard the COVID-19 battle call.