

SHM Position on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Issued April 2, 2020

The Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM) resolutely stands with our peers across medicine to speak in a unified voice about the challenges facing front-line healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly around access to PPE and other vital safety equipment. The health and safety of clinicians, patients, and our communities are of paramount importance. As such, SHM fully supports the Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS) statement on PPE and physician professionalism.

Read the full CMSS statement below.

CMSS STATEMENT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

April 2, 2020

With more than 800,000 physicians across 45 specialties, the Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS) strongly urges action to ensure safer working conditions for physicians and other healthcare professionals on the frontline of direct patient care.

CMSS and its member societies believe that adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) should be a fundamental expectation for all frontline healthcare professionals:

1. CMSS and its member societies urge federal, state and local authorities to ensure an adequate supply and distribution of PPE for every frontline healthcare professional in the United States. Physicians and other healthcare professionals can and should expect their institutions to provide appropriate means to limit occupational exposure.
2. Physicians and other healthcare professionals should be allowed to bring their own PPE to protect themselves, colleagues, and patients when these items are in short supply at their institutions. CMSS supports the Joint Commission [statement](#) allowing the use of private PPE, but this option does not obviate an institution's responsibility to provide adequate PPE to all healthcare personnel.
3. The United States needs a simple, uniform mechanism for all healthcare facilities to report their PPE needs and other medical supply needs to help guide optimal distribution of supplies across the country.
4. Physicians and other healthcare professionals should not be at risk of having their employment terminated, or be otherwise disciplined, for speaking out, within their health care systems or publicly, on conditions and practices related to care of COVID-19 patients (including lack of PPE) that the physician and other healthcare professional has direct knowledge of and deems to be in conflict with the health and safety of patients, themselves, and others involved in providing care to patients.

5. CMSS supports the American Medical Association (AMA) [statement](#) that “no employer should restrict physicians’ freedom to advocate for the best interest of their patients.” Physicians and other healthcare professionals may appropriately decide that going public (including to the news media and on social media) with their concerns is necessary to achieve needed change for the health and safety of patients and clinicians, both within the healthcare facility and more broadly.

Council of Medical Specialty Societies

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Dermatology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
American College of Cardiology
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Epilepsy Society
American Gastroenterological Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Medical Informatics Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Thoracic Society
American Urological Association
Association for Clinical Oncology
Infectious Diseases Society of America

North American Spine Society
Society of Critical Care Medicine
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Interventional Radiology
Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging
Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Society for Vascular Surgery