

CMSS Statement on Restrictions to Slow the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Ambassador Birx:

Thank you for actively engaging the health care community—particularly the nation’s physicians and the organizations that represent them—in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.

As more than 800,000 physicians across more than 40 specialties in medicine, we continue to support travel and gathering restrictions to slow the transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Physicians, other health professionals, and staff are putting themselves in harm’s way without adequate personal protective equipment or necessary tools (such as ventilators) as well as with no proven treatment or vaccine for the virus.

Significant COVID-19 transmission continues across the United States, and we need your leadership in supporting science-based recommendations on social distancing that can slow the virus. Our societies have closely adhered to these measures by moving our staff to fulltime telework and canceling in-person meetings (including annual meetings). These actions have helped to keep physicians and other health professionals in health care facilities, including hospitals, and reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Statewide efforts alone will not sufficiently control this public health crisis. A strong nationwide plan that supports and enforces social distancing—and recognizes that our health and our economy are inextricably linked—should remain in place until public health and medical experts indicate it can be lifted.

Federal, state, and local governments should only set a date for lifting nationwide social distancing restrictions consistent with assessments by public health and medical experts. Lifting restrictions sooner will gravely jeopardize the health of all Americans and extend the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Again, thank you for actively engaging the nation’s physicians and the organizations that represent them. We appreciate your considering these comments and welcome an opportunity for further dialogue.

Sincerely,

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
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 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