



## COLORADO ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Sunday, March 15, 2020

The Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor  
State of Colorado  
200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm. 136  
Denver, CO 80203

### **RE: COVID-19 Call to the Public and Measures to Support Healthcare Workers**

Dear Governor Polis:

On behalf of the state's healthcare workers and facilities, thank you for the swift action of declaring a statewide emergency in the light of COVID-19. The State's actions to support healthcare workers and protect the public are much appreciated. As you know, Colorado's healthcare workers are in every community in the state and on the front lines of caring for patients. As the Coronavirus situation unfolds, we urge you and the State of Colorado to call on individuals to Stay Home.

**Call on individuals in the general public to Stay Home. Avoid gatherings of any size through social distancing, and stay home except for necessities.** Such a call is prudent to achieve maximum mitigation of the spread of Coronavirus, to ensure our health system capacity is not strained beyond its limits. We are aware of multiple health clinics and health systems already facing critical supply shortages. Dramatically slowing the spread now will ensure our health system can care for those who get COVID-19 or have other healthcare needs.

We urge the State to take the following additional measures to combat the crisis:

- **Issue clear and concise guidance for clinics facing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shortages, and increase the speed at which requests for PPE can be fulfilled.** As community spread has increased, some facilities around the state have already stopped testing or limited testing to only patients meeting inpatient criteria. If testing is to be expanded, primary care clinics will increasingly be tasked with this role and need the equipment and guidance to safely do so.
- **Clarify outpatient setting testing protocols and communications to doctors.** As patients have been directed to their doctor by governments and media, the lack of availability of PPE and guidance on safety procedures to prevent spread to other patients in the clinic are slowing community clinics' ability to respond. CDPHE should work with community practices as well as larger systems to implement the rapidly changing guidance on who requires testing, where that testing is available and to provide clear instructions for patients who are sick but don't meet testing criteria.
- **Take additional measures to support healthcare workers:** Healthcare workers are essential to the COVID-19 response and serve at the center of the crisis. At the same time, these workers have their own health and family responsibilities to attend. Measures should be implemented immediately to support healthcare workers in need of childcare, mental health services, and support caring for ill family members.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Cawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Cawley" clearly distinguishable.

John Cawley, MD, FAAFP

President

*Colorado Academy of Family Physicians*

**Cosignatories:**

*American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter*

*American College of Physicians, Colorado Chapter*

*Colorado Hospital Association*

*Colorado Medical Society*

*Colorado Nurses Association*

*Colorado Rural Health Center*

Contact: Ryan Biehle, CAFPP Deputy CEO for Policy and External Affairs [ryan@coloradoafp.org](mailto:ryan@coloradoafp.org)

CC:

Lisa Kaufman, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

David Oppenheim, Legislative Director, Office of the Governor

Jill Ryan, Executive Director, CDPHE