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April 9, 2020

The Pennsylvania College of Emergency Physicians (PACEP) supports the statements released recently by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), the American Medical Association (AMA), and the Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS) in regards to PPE supply and distribution to physicians and healthcare workers, support of physicians and healthcare workers who advocate for safer working conditions, and ensuring appropriate physician benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PACEP supports the following:

1. Efforts to ensure front-line physicians and healthcare workers receive an appropriate quantity and quality of PPE.
2. 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. Further, 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.
3. Emergency Departments are seeing fewer patients as a positive outcome of official recommendations for people to stay home. However, PPE is still in short supply at many hospitals. Emergency physicians working on the front lines of this pandemic and saving lives everyday should not fear losing their benefits as a result of speaking out about their working conditions. Nor should they fear losing their health by having to work without adequate protective equipment.

<https://www.emergencyphysicians.org/press-releases/2020/3-30-20-acep-strongly-supports-emergency-physicians-who-advocate-for-safer-working-conditions-amidst-pandemic>

<https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/ama-statements/ama-backs-physician-freedom-advocate-patient-interests>

<https://cmss.org/cmss-statement-ppe/>