

Protecting Patient and Physician Health and Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Regents on behalf of the Board of Regents on
April 1, 2020**

ACP continues to urge federal, state and local authorities to ensure that there is an adequate supply and distribution of personal protection equipment (PPE) for all clinicians and health care workers. Physicians can and should expect their institutions to provide appropriate means to limit occupational exposure.

Physicians should be allowed to bring their own personal protection equipment (PPE) to protect themselves and others around them when these items are in short supply at their health care systems.

Health care systems should work with physicians to improve care and patient safety ensuring the best interests of patients.

Physicians should not be at risk of having their employment terminated, or be otherwise disciplined, for speaking out in a professional manner, within their health care systems or publicly, on conditions and practices related to care of COVID-19 patients (including lack of personal protection equipment) that the physician has direct knowledge of and believes is in conflict with the health and safety of patients and clinicians. Physicians may appropriately decide that going public (including to the news media and on social media) with their concerns is their professional responsibility, to achieve needed change for the health and safety of patients and clinicians, both within the health care facility and more broadly.