

Dear Colorado Chapter ACP member,

As our state and nation is faced with the developing coronavirus epidemic, I wanted to let you know that our chapter, with approval from our national office, has signed on to a letter to Governor Polis, which may be found below. Additionally, a link to the ACP's resources on coronavirus was included in our chapter newsletter that was sent out to all members. Let's all support each other through these challenging times.

LETTER TO GOVERNOR POLIS:

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,

John Cawley, MD, FAAFP  
President, Colorado Academy of Family Physicians

**Cosignatories:**

American College of Physicians – Colorado Chapter  
Colorado Hospital Association  
Colorado Medical Society  
Colorado Nurses Association  
Colorado Rural Health Center

Al Steinmann, MD  
Governor  
Colorado Chapter of the American College of Physicians