

CRITICAL CARE SOCIETIES COLLABORATIVE (CCSC)



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE CRITICAL CARE SOCIETIES COLLABORATIVE TO THE U.S. CONGRESS AND THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

March 26, 2020

The Critical Care Societies Collaborative, comprised of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN), American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), the American Thoracic Society (ATS), and the Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM), urge the U.S. Federal, state and local governments to maintain and strengthen social distancing requirements. We also implore the public to fully participate in the social distancing effort to prevent further spread of the COVID-19 virus. “While staying at home and distancing yourself from others may feel passive, it is the most active step the American public can take to fight the epidemic,” said James M. Beck, MD, president of the ATS. “America’s first responders, physicians, respiratory therapists, nurses and advanced health care providers are doing their part to protect the public, we urge the public and policy makers to join us in this effort to maintain social distancing until we have flattened the curve on COVID,” said Stephanie Levine, MD, president of CHEST.

As a unified group of critical care professionals who are caring for patients infected with COVID-19, we implore federal, state and local officials to continue to implement social distancing and suspend non-essential activities to slow the progress of the pandemic and allow adequate capacity in the U.S. health care system to effectively treat affected patients. This directive should include suspension of all mass transit systems (air, rail, sea and land) as well as closure of all hotel and hospitality venues (except those serving healthcare-related workers and natural disaster victims).

In addition, Lewis J. Kaplan, MD, president of SCCM, urges health care institutions to “suspend non-essential activities (e.g. elective surgeries and procedures) to support social distancing, minimize patient and provider exposures, and preserve healthcare resources.”

“If this virus is not stringently contained now, the repercussions to the health of the American population, as well as the impact on the country’s economic, educational and welfare systems, will be incalculable,” notes Megan E. Brunson, RN, president of AACN.

The directive should require all people within the borders of the United States to shelter in place for at least three weeks, beginning on March 30, 2020, allowing movement for urgent medical attention, food necessities and local, independent exercise only.

Our guidance to the public, U.S. Federal Government and state and local governments comes after substantial input from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and careful examination of best practices from other health officials from around the world.