



COLORADO CHAPTER

**American College of Emergency Physicians**

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE

August 31, 2021

Dear Colorado ACEP Members,

As many of you know, yesterday the Colorado State Board of Health mandated that employees at 3,800 licensed facilities across the state must be vaccinated for COVID by the end of October. While this has been a contentious issue, I wanted to make sure you were all aware that COACEP did write a letter in support of this decision after a vote by your Board of Directors. I tell you this to ensure we have been fully transparent with our members and to also ensure that you understand why it is imperative that we as EM physicians are unified on this.

As front-line workers, we have firsthand experience with the severe health effects of COVID, the number of days of missed work, the cost to our health care system, and the effect it has on family members who have lost loved ones. This pandemic has been devastating in Colorado and across the world. We as emergency physicians have a duty to our patients and our peers to use our expertise to help our communities through this unprecedented public health emergency. Patients come to our hospitals, trusting that their physicians and care team will keep them safe and do everything possible to help them. Current data overwhelmingly supports the idea that unvaccinated individuals have a higher risk of contracting COVID and increase the risk of COVID transmission in their communities. Health care workers constantly interact with members of the community, including those most medically vulnerable. With this in mind, it's clear that unvaccinated health care workers pose a unique threat to their patients, their peers, and their communities.

The second reason we believe this mandate is important is that the health care community should set the example for public health. Our understanding of science should be apolitical and should be based on data. The data we have on the vaccines, especially the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, clearly show their efficacy and low risk of serious side effects. In the case of the Pfizer vaccine, the FDA has deemed the evidence compelling enough to grant full approval. We know from a public health perspective that COVID vaccinations save lives and stop the spread of COVID. If those who work in health care are not the stewards of science and public health, then who will be?

Finally, our jobs as health care providers, or employees of health systems, are jobs that require certain safety mechanisms to perform them. We all are

Colorado ACEP  
1520 W Dry Creek Rd  
Littleton, CO 80120

(303) 255-2715  
E-mail: [suzanne.acep@comcast.net](mailto:suzanne.acep@comcast.net)

#### OFFICERS

Ramnik Dhaliwal, MD, JD  
President  
Allison Trop, MD  
President-Elect  
Anna Engeln, MD  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Nathaniel Hibbs, DO, MA, FACEP,  
Immediate Past President

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jasmeet Dhaliwal, MD, MPH  
Ramnik Dhaliwal, MD, JD  
Anna Engeln, MD, FACEP  
Alexis Garza, MD  
Nathaniel Hibbs, DO, FACEP  
Bill Hilty, MD, PhD  
Mark Hinton, MD  
Rachelle Klammer, MD, FACEP  
Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP  
Carla Murphy, DO, FACEP  
Neal O'Connor, MD, FACEP  
Bradley Shy, MD, FACEP  
Allison Trop, MD, FACEP  
Pramod Vangeti, MD, FACEP

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Suzanne Hamilton



COLORADO CHAPTER

**American College of Emergency Physicians**

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE

required to get MMR shots, tetanus shots, show immunity for varicella, and prove we don't have TB. Further, we are all required to get the flu shot. This is no different. This is a disease that is killing our co-workers, patients and families and has a high infection rate. The requirement to get the vaccine is no different than all of the other vaccines we are required to get to work in any hospital in the state.

So, as we move towards the end of October, your COACEP BOD and I urge you to help inform co-workers that this mandate will save lives, will protect our patients, protect our workforce and ability to staff our hospitals at a time of great need, is based on science, and is no different than all of the other requirements to work at a hospital. We have compassion and wish courage to those who will now be facing hard personal decisions regarding their choice to receive the vaccine. COACEP continues to see all patients and healthcare workers as humans and will continue to strive to deliver equal care for all patients and treat our colleagues and coworkers with dignity. In that vein, we urge you to have this conversation with co-workers whether they be physicians, nurses, environmental service staff, lab workers, paramedics, or any other employee of your hospital or system so they may choose what science has shown to be safe and effective. Let us be the champions of public health and the health of our fellow co-workers and community. Hopefully with others like us leading the way, this can be another important step toward overcoming this historic pandemic.

Sincerely,

Ramnik Dhaliwal MD, JD

President, COACEP