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March 20, 2020

AAEM/RSA Position Statement on the Protection of Residents and Medical Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. AAEM/RSA requests that all residents and medical students be provided unencumbered access to full personal protective gear during all essential clinical activities and patient care. Given significant supply shortages, AAEM/RSA demands that PPE, including gowns, masks, PAPR devices, and eye protection be preferentially distributed to and prioritized for emergency department and intensive care use over non-emergent healthcare or civilian use.
2. AAEM/RSA believes that a board certified emergency physician is the most senior and capable professional in the emergency department and is responsible for leading the patient care team. In the interest of patient safety, especially given the current COVID-19 pandemic, we firmly believe that all nurse practitioners and physician assistants in the emergency department should continue to function within their scope of practice as providers under the supervision of a board certified emergency physician. We oppose current calls to allow nurse practitioners to be able to independently practice during this pandemic.
3. AAEM/RSA believes that medical students play an essential role in all aspects of patient care. Given the severity of illness of COVID-19, AAEM/RSA wholeheartedly supports efforts to guarantee the personal safety and protection of medical students during this pandemic. We appreciate the strong voluntary efforts by our medical student community to aid their resident and attending colleagues, as well as our patients, during this time of need.
4. AAEM/RSA supports the American Board of Emergency Medicine's (ABEM) recent [open letter](#) to emergency residents regarding COVID-19, quarantine, and ABEM eligibility. We endorse the steps taken by ABEM to protect resident training while remaining flexible and dynamic during these uncertain times.

AAEM/RSA exists to support all emergency medicine residents and medical students. We understand the severity of this pandemic and will continue to fight relentlessly to represent the safety and protection of our members both on The Hill and in the hospital.