



WYOMING MEDICAL SOCIETY

Advocating for doctors and their patients since 1903

March 20, 2020

Honorable Mark Gordon
Governor
State of Wyoming
Address
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Dear Governor Gordon,

The Wyoming Medical Society (WMS) was founded in 1903 to provide representation, advocacy and service to Wyoming physicians and physician assistants and their patients. We strive to be an efficient, member-driven organization with efforts aimed at protecting healthcare delivery and patient care across the state.

As Wyoming faces the challenges created by the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), there seem to be more questions than answers and a growing list of decisions that must be made, none of which are easy. It's times like these that we are humbly reminded of the necessary role government plays in our lives during a crisis providing protection, directing preparedness, coordinating response and communicating to the public. WMS recognizes the difficulty of leading these efforts and commends the efforts of you, your team, and our State Public Health Officer, Dr. Alexia Harrist.

Medicine is watching the development of this virus and seeing that different parts of the country are experiencing varying levels of activity. We know that risk of exposure will continue to increase as the outbreak in the U.S. expands. Already, Wyoming has one community with definitive instances of community spread and we know other instances are likely present, but not yet identified due to low testing. Widespread transmission will translate into large numbers of people needing medical care at the same time, which our healthcare system is not prepared to support. Currently, due to an absence of a vaccine and known treatment medications, nonpharmaceutical interventions are the most important response strategy to lessen the spread and impact of the virus.

The actions being taken at both the county and state level are necessary to mitigate risk of exposure and reduce community spread in efforts to flatten the curve. Everything from closing schools and public places to strongly encouraging social distancing are critical components and likely our best hope to ensure this pandemic plays out

differently in our state than in other parts of the world witnessing tragedy and devastation. We have every reason to be proud of the healthcare system in Wyoming and the medical community that holds that system together. Without measures like the ones taken in recent days that healthcare system is vulnerable to be quickly overwhelmed.

No one envies the difficult position our leaders are in right now. Our state's physicians and PAs leading our medical community are indebted to your leadership and grateful for the important decisions you're making for Wyoming and her people.

We will make it through this together. Not everyone will understand the gravity of what could have been had our leaders in public health and state government not stepped in and implemented aggressive mitigation strategies. We appreciate you. We are here to serve the state and are proud to be Wyomingites in these trying times.

Most Sincerely,



David B. Wheeler, MD, PhD
President
Wyoming Medical Society

The following organizations have endorsed and joined as signers to this letter to offer their support:

Wyoming Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Wyoming Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians
Wyoming Chapter of the American Psychiatric Association
Wyoming Chapter of the American College of Physicians
Wyoming Chapter of the American Ophthalmological Association