

# Sustain, Protect, and Support the Current Workforce



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*Disclosures, affiliations, and expanded written remarks were provided to COGME*

# Sustain, Protect, and Support

- Information gathered from the current workforce

## *Metro DC region*

- Frontline providers treating patients with COVID-19
- Professionals across inpatient and ambulatory settings, including those whose work has been impacted by the pandemic

## *GW Medical Center*

- GME leaders and health system administrators
- My own experience in workforce development and planning





## **Key Themes from Interviews**

- **Regulatory and practice barriers that limit current workforce from practicing to top-of-license / nimble staffing during pandemic**
- **Protection and support for the frontline COVID-19 health workforce**
- **Provider mental health and emotional well-being concerns**

# Regulatory/Practice Barriers

1. Advocate for suspension/elimination of regulatory barriers at state and federal levels that limit top-of-license practice
2. Clarify waivers from federal agencies that facilitate top-of-license practice (make temporary waivers permanent)
3. Authorize APPs to perform additional services\* to alleviate strain on health care delivery systems
4. Develop registries to identify HCPs willing to serve during a public health emergency (e.g. link to licensure, cert/recert systems)
5. Create guidance for accelerated new employee screening and onboarding procedures during crisis situations

APP=advanced practice professional (PA, APRN);HCP=healthcare professional



# Protect/Support Frontline Workforce

1. Require health systems train their staff and assess provider readiness for a pandemic response
2. Incentivize industry to produce and health delivery systems to maintain adequate supplies of PPE
3. Publish guidance on surface contact risks and sanitization
4. Fund training in emergency/operational medicine for APPs to support leadership during pandemic response
5. Rapidly increase access to diagnostic testing for COVID-19





# Protect/Support Frontline Workforce

6. Establish formal networks to ensure providers, including in rural and MUAs, have rapid access to pandemic response guidance
7. Promote state/federal relief funds or public-private partnerships to address commonly recognized barriers to workforce continuity
8. Enhance interprofessional collaborative practice in pandemic response planning and implementation
9. Conduct analyses of health delivery system successes and failures during COVID-19 and disseminate lessons learned





# Provider Mental Health/Well-Being

1. Facilitate safe environments for providers to openly discuss concerns/challenges and formulate strategies
2. Develop evidence-based criteria, ethics-informed practices around acute care resource management during a crisis
3. Expand access to mental health and counseling services to frontline providers



# Thank you.



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