



PRESS RELEASE

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MAJOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CALL FOR COVID-19 VACCINE MANDATES FOR ALL HEALTH WORKERS

Groups include American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, Association of American Medical Colleges, National Association for Home Care and Hospice, and American Society of Nephrology

Washington, DC (July 26, 2021) — With COVID-19 case counts rising amid the spread of the Delta variant, more than 50 health care professional societies and organizations called for all health care employers to require their employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in a joint statement released today. These societies and organizations represent millions of workers throughout health and long-term care – from doctors and nurses to pharmacists and physician assistants, from public health workers and epidemiologists to long-term care, home care, and hospice workers.

Their endorsement of mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for health care workers aims to protect the safety of patients and residents of long-term care facilities and make the health care sector a leader in COVID-19 vaccination just as cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are once again rising throughout the United States.

“Health care workers have an ethical duty to put patients’ health and well-being first, and getting vaccinated for COVID-19 is integral to that duty,” said **Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel**, vice provost for global initiatives at the **University of Pennsylvania**, who organized the statement. “Employer vaccine mandates are effective and lifesaving, and they are especially appropriate in health care and long-term care settings. No patient should have to worry that they could become infected by one of their care providers, and no provider should put their patient at risk.”

Although vaccination rates among health care workers have been better than that of the general population, by the end of May, [one-in-four hospital workers](#) had not been vaccinated. This leaves patients -- especially unvaccinated children, the elderly, and the immunocompromised -- facing a growing risk of infection as the

Delta variant surges. If implemented, this mandate would cover [17 million health care workers](#).

“As the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths continue to rise due to the COVID-19 Delta variant, especially among unvaccinated persons, requiring that all health care workers who can get vaccinated receive a COVID-19 vaccine will help protect them, their patients, loved ones and others who are vulnerable and immunocompromised,” said **George M. Abraham**, MD, MPH, FACP, President, **American College of Physicians**.

“As COVID-19 variants emerge and proliferate, it’s critical that we protect everyone who lives and works in long-term care, by ensuring staff are fully vaccinated. Throughout the pandemic, long-term care providers have demonstrated their dedication, commitment and bravery in the face of unprecedented, challenging circumstances. They must heed the scientific evidence and do everything possible to deliver safe, quality care to the older adults and others they serve,” said **Katie Smith Sloan**, president and CEO, **LeadingAge**.

“As frontline providers, PAs are committed to protecting our patients and the health of the public. Receiving the vaccine is a necessary step for fulfilling this commitment. AAPA supports requiring vaccinations for health workers to keep both the public and healthcare workforce safe,” said **Jennifer M. Orozco**, MMS, PA-C, DFAAPA, president of the **American Academy of PAs**.

“Employers have a fundamental responsibility to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees and the people they serve,” said **Sandra Leal**, PharmD, MPH, FAPhA, CDCES, president, **American Pharmacists Association**. “Due to the nature of the times we live in, this must include requiring their employees be vaccinated, to protect themselves and others from the COVID-19 virus.”

“Health care workers are role models and families rely on them to care for their loved ones,” said **Elena Rios**, MD, MSPH, FACP, president and CEO, **National Hispanic Medical Association**. “Now, the most important thing health care workers can do is get the COVID-19 vaccine, setting an example of the best thing we can all do to end the pandemic.”

“Universal vaccination of health care workers is the single most important step healthcare institutions can do to stop the spread of COVID-19. It is essential for protecting the health of their workers, the safety of their patients and ultimately the health of their communities,” said **Georges C. Benjamin**, MD, executive director, **American Public Health Association**.

“We need to do everything possible to help children, adolescents, and their families safely emerge from the global pandemic,” said **Gabrielle A. Carlson**, MD, President, **American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry**. “It is imperative that those who can receive a COVID-19 vaccine do so, especially those who work in a healthcare facility where care is provided to the unvaccinated, including vulnerable children for whom a COVID-19 vaccine is not yet approved.”

“Requiring COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment is a powerful tool for protecting frontline workers and patients against highly contagious variants and in communities with significant numbers of unvaccinated people. Health care organizations have an opportunity to lead by example, setting a precedent for other organizations to require vaccination to safeguard the health of employees and entire communities,” said **Daniel P. McQuillen**, MD, FIDSA, president-elect, **Infectious Diseases Society of America**.

“The AAMC, whose members continue to provide patient care on the frontlines of this ongoing pandemic, did not come to this decision lightly,” said **David J. Skorton**, MD, president and CEO of the **Association of American Medical Colleges**. “Based on the large and convincing body of evidence and real-world experience of the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines, requiring vaccinations among those serving at health care institutions is the right decision to promote the health of our patients, their families, and communities.”

“Patients with cancer need to know that their environment, including the people who care for them, is as safe as possible,” said **Everett E. Vokes**, MD, FASCO, president, **American Society of Clinical Oncology**. “Mandatory vaccination is entirely consistent with ASCO’s core values of evidence, care, and impact.”

The joint statement and full list of signatories is below.

Joint Statement in Support of COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates for All Workers in Health and Long-Term Care

Due to the recent COVID-19 surge and the availability of safe and effective vaccines, our health care organizations and societies advocate that all health care and long-term care employers require their workers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This is the logical fulfillment of the ethical commitment of all health care workers to put patients as well as residents of long-term care facilities first and take all steps necessary to ensure their health and well-being.

Because of highly contagious variants, including the Delta variant, and significant numbers of unvaccinated people, COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are once again rising throughout the United States. Vaccination is the primary way to put the pandemic behind us and avoid the return of stringent public health measures.

Unfortunately, many health care and long-term care personnel remain unvaccinated. As we move towards full FDA approval of the currently available vaccines, all health care workers should get vaccinated for their own health, and to protect their colleagues, families, residents of long-term care facilities and patients. This is especially necessary to protect those who are vulnerable, including unvaccinated children and the immunocompromised. Indeed, this is why many health care and long-term care organizations already require vaccinations for influenza, hepatitis B, and pertussis.

We call for all health care and long-term care employers to require their employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

We stand with the growing number of experts and institutions that support the requirement for universal vaccination of health workers. While we recognize some workers cannot be vaccinated because of identified medical reasons and should be exempted from a mandate, they constitute a small minority of all workers. Employers should consider any applicable state laws on a case-by-case basis.

Existing COVID-19 vaccine mandates have proven effective. Simultaneously, we recognize the historical mistrust of health care institutions, including among many in our own health care workforce. We must continue to address workers' concerns, engage with marginalized populations, and work with trusted messengers to improve vaccine acceptance.

As the health care community leads the way in requiring vaccines for our employees, we hope all other employers across the country will follow our lead and implement effective policies to ensure vaccination. The health and safety of U.S. workers, families, communities, and the nation depends on it.

SIGNATORIES

Listed Alphabetically

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
American Academy of Nursing
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of PAs (AAPA)
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
American Association of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Clinical Endocrinology
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)
American College of Physicians (ACP)
American College of Preventive Medicine
American College of Surgeons (ACS)
American Epilepsy Society
American Medical Association (AMA)
American Nursing Association (ANA)
American Pharmacist Association (APhA)
American Psychiatric Association (APA)
American Public Health Association (APHA)
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society for Hematology (ASH)
American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO)
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)
American Society of Nephrology
American Thoracic Society
Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)

Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS)
HIV Medicine Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)
LeadingAge
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association of Indian Nurses of America
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National League for Nursing
National Medical Association
National Pharmaceutical Association (NPhA)
Nurses Who Vaccinate
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN)
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS)
Philippine Nurses Association of America, Inc (PNAA)
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Interventional Radiology
Texas Nurses Association
The John A. Hartford Foundation
Transcultural Nursing Society
Virgin Islands State Nurses Association
Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society

Since 1966, ASN has been leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients. ASN has more than 21,000 members representing 131 countries. For more information, please visit www.asn-online.org or contact the society at 202-640-4660.

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