

MSDC Statement on Protecting District Physicians During COVID-19

With more than 3,000 members across the District, the Medical Society of DC strongly urges action to ensure safer working conditions for physicians and other healthcare professionals on the frontline of direct patient care.

1. MSDC urges local authorities to ensure an adequate supply and distribution of PPE for every frontline healthcare professional in the District. Physicians and other healthcare professionals can and should expect their institutions to provide appropriate available means to limit occupational exposure.
2. Physicians and other healthcare professionals should be allowed to bring their own PPE to protect themselves, colleagues, and patients when these items are in short supply under their institutions' guidelines. MSDC supports the [American Medical Association \(AMA\) statement](#) allowing the use of private PPE, but this option does not obviate an institution's responsibility to provide adequate PPE to all healthcare personnel.
3. Physicians and other healthcare professionals should not be at risk of having their employment terminated, or be otherwise disciplined, for speaking out, within their health care systems or publicly, on conditions and practices related to care of COVID-19 patients (including lack of PPE) that the physician and other healthcare professional has direct knowledge of and deems to be in conflict with the health and safety of patients, themselves, and others involved in providing care to patients.
4. MSDC supports the [American Medical Association \(AMA\) statement](#) that "no employer should restrict physicians' freedom to advocate for the best interest of their patients." Physicians and other healthcare professionals may appropriately decide that going public (including to the news media and on social media) with their concerns (without violating patients' HIPAA rights) is necessary to achieve needed change for the health and safety of patients and clinicians, both within the healthcare facility and more broadly.

Statement modeled from the statement released by the Council of Medical Specialty Societies on April 2, 2020.