

AAMC Group on Student Affairs (GSA)

Community Call on Medical Student Wellbeing

April 13, 2020
4 pm EDT



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American Medical Colleges

GSA Community Call on Medical Student Wellbeing

GSA COSA Well-being Working Group

- **Chair's Welcome** - Chantal Young, Ph.D., Director of Medical Student Wellness, Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry & the Behavioral Sciences, Clinical Psychologist, Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California

GSA Community Call on Medical Student Wellbeing

Call Agenda

- General Welcome and Opening Remarks - Chantal Young, PhD
- Introduction of the Working Group - Chantal Young, PhD
- AAMC COVID related wellbeing initiatives - NaShieka Knight, MDiv, MA
- Working Group initiatives related to COVID - Chantal Young, PhD and Committee
- CFAS Resilience Committee- What are institutions doing to support faculty wellbeing at this time? - Mona Abaza, MD, Chair, CFAS Resilience Committee
- Building Resilience: Strategies and Tips - Adi Haramati, PhD, CFAS Chair Elect
- Open Discussion - Chantal Young, PhD and Committee

GSA Community Call on Medical Student Wellbeing

Chantal Young, PhD - Chair

Director of Medical Student Wellness
Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California

Wei Wei Lee, MD, MPH

Central Region Representative
Assistant Professor of Medicine
Assistant Dean of Students
Director, Wellness Programs
University of Chicago

Jennifer Caceres, MD, FACP

Southern Region Representative
Associate Professor of Medicine
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs
Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine
Florida Atlantic University

Margaret Rea, PhD

Western Region Representative
Director, Student and Resident Wellness
School of Medicine and Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing
University of California Davis

Kathleen Kashima, PHD

Ex-officio Member/Chair, GSA Committee on Student Affairs
Senior Associate Dean of Students
University of Illinois College of Medicine

Christa Zehle, MD

Northeast Region Representative
Interim Associate Dean for Medical Education
Associate Dean for Students
The Robert Larner, MD College of Medicine at the University of Vermont

Amelia (Amy) Phillips, MPH, CPH

Director of Wellbeing
USF Health Morsani College of Medicine

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AAMC COVID related wellbeing initiatives - NaShieka Knight, MDiv, MA

- Added 5 new constituent contributed articles to the Medical Student Wellbeing Webpage:
 - **Rediscovering my Wellness in the Midst of COVID-19**
 - **Top 10 Tips for Maintaining Emotional Health in Stressful Times**
 - **Managing Anxiety and Stress in a Time of Pandemic**
 - **How to Make Your Mind Your Friend, Even During COVID**
 - **Finding a Community in Grief During Medical School**
- Facilitating biweekly calls with the Working Group on Medical Student Wellbeing to hear concerns, collate promising and effective practices, and prepare resources on wellbeing for medical schools and learners
- Developing a wellbeing webpage on the GSA page to share resources for the medical school community

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AAMC Resources

➤ **Medical Student Well-Being**

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/attending-medical-school/medical-school-survival-tips/medical-student-well-being/>

➤ **Well-Being in Academic Medicine: Resources for Faculty**

<https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/wellbeing/faculty>

➤ **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RESOURCE HUB**

<https://www.aamc.org/coronavirus-covid-19-resource-hub#services>

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COVID Statement on Student Mental Health from AAMC COSA Working Group on Medical Student Wellbeing

The COSA Working Group on Medical Student Wellbeing is recommending that schools develop an aggressive outreach approach to support students during this unprecedented time.

Increased student mental health risk

The COVID-19 pandemic and current quarantine/stay-at-home situation is likely to cause increased risk for mental health difficulties among some medical students. Preexisting mental health problems may be exacerbated by factors such as fear and worry about the physical safety of themselves and loved ones, increased social isolation, ample time to ruminate, loss of consistent routine, financial strain, increase in substance use, and academic/career uncertainty.

Recommended approach

This Working Group is recommending that schools perform individual student check-ins with the entire student body individually via phone or video.

***It is recommended that a licensed mental health clinician lead this outreach effort and serve as the point person if possible.

Before launching check-ins, schools must:

1. Be in communication with local mental health services (such as student health counseling and/or the wellness office) about how check-ins and referrals will function.
2. Be knowledgeable about how to access emergency and 24/7 mental health crisis services in case a student is at risk for suicide.
3. Be prepared with a list of resources to respond to the following student concerns:
 - a. student health counseling / mental health services
 - b. mental health and crisis services for out-of-state students
 - c. grief/bereavement services
 - d. student health/primary care services
 - e. procedure to follow if student suspects they are COVID-positive
 - f. plan for financial relief and/or providing food/supplies to needy students
 - g. academic questions and academic concerns
 - h. domestic violence and sexual assault services

Factors to consider

1. Because it is a challenge to identify which students are at risk, the most thorough recommended action is to reach out to all students individually via phone or video while students remain isolated.
2. Serious efforts should be made to prioritize this recommendation. Schools should activate various constituencies to assist including counseling, wellness office, other available licensed mental health clinicians, academic support advisors, career advisors, student affairs faculty and staff, learning community faculty, faculty coaches and mentors, or other faculty who may be currently underutilized such as adjunct faculty.
3. Schools should reach out to local mental health services (such as student health counseling and/or wellness office) to discuss how check-ins will operate. Topics should include:

RECOMMENDED APPROACHES FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING: A RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COSA Working Group on Medical Student Wellbeing has developed the following approaches for administrators, faculty, staff, and students that medical schools may implement during this unprecedented time. Once the pandemic subsides, psychosocial debriefing (formal or informal space to be able to talk about the emotional impact of the pandemic) will be necessary.

ADMINISTRATION (DEANS AND CHAIRS)	
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow guidelines for aggressive student check-ins from the Statement from AAMC COSA Working Group on Medical Student Wellbeing. • Send emails from administration to student body on a regular basis, even if no new updates (<i>recommended frequency: daily or weekly</i>). • Send emails from dean centered on “vision” and leadership re: COVID (<i>recommended frequency: weekly</i>). • Attend AAMC virtual discussions regarding COVID-19 impacts on medical school curriculum and career advising in order to be able to address the concerns of students related to these areas. • Host virtual town halls by administration (i.e., by student affairs and/or curriculum deans) IF deans are perceived as supportive and ease anxiety; all deans present and students are interactive; students can ask questions before and during (anonymously if desired); report out provided to students after (<i>recommended frequency: weekly</i>). • Host virtual town hall meetings with faculty and staff so they are updated on initiatives of the medical school and remain connected (need to make sure the faculty and staff remain well to support the students!) (<i>recommended frequency: weekly or biweekly</i>).
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop centralized COVID-19 online information site for institution to remain updated. • Develop website that students can refer loved ones to for institutional updates. • Identify resources for those that are food insecure due to COVID and/or are currently in quarantine due to being ill. • Develop a plan with Student Affairs on how to handle student crises related to COVID-19 (emergency contacts, communication tree, crisis program referral lists).
SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide list of ways students, faculty, and staff can make a difference and be involved with medical efforts around COVID-19, even while staying at home (supporting residents, etc.). • Provide administrative support to streamline communications between students, faculty, and staff. • Engage student leaders in organizing student-led activities to convey a sense of unity. • Engage, recruit, and train faculty and staff to participate in regularly scheduled student check-in calls.

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Mona M. Abaza, MD, MS - Chair, Council of Faculty and Academic Societies (CFAS) Resilience Committee

Professor

Vice Chair of Faculty Affairs and Diversity

Voice Practice Director

Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

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Aviad Haramati, PhD - CFAS Chair Elect

Professor, Division of Integrative Physiology

Dept. of Biochemistry, Molecular and Cellular Biology

Director, Center for Innovation and Leadership in Education (CENTILE)

Co-director, CAM Graduate Program

Georgetown University School of Medicine

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- **Open Discussion and Q&A** - moderated by Chantal Young, PhD