



# COVID-19: Update & Resources

March 27, 2020

Dear NYS AAP - Chapter 2 Member,

It's now been another week that we've been living and dealing with COVID-19 24 hours a day. As always, we at the NYS AAP - Chapter 2 are inspired by the efforts of all our pediatric members to keep children safe during this pandemic.

As I reiterated last week, I know you are getting deluged with emails, and that hospital regulations are changing (sometimes dramatically) daily. Keeping up with all the information for yourself and your patients, adapting to new ways to delivering care, and just keeping our families together (and our kids from killing each other :) ) is exhausting. This is what your local AAP Chapter and the National AAP have been doing:

- **National AAP issued a “CALL TO ACTION”** on behalf of pediatricians and other physicians to **increase the availability/supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**.
- For those requiring more information, the **National AAP continues to update web resources for members, available here: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>** and maintains an **email address [COVID-19@aap.org](mailto:COVID-19@aap.org)** for questions related to pediatrics.
- Through information provided by Chapter members, we realized that **ERISA health plans were not paying (nor obligated to pay) for telehealth visits**. As ERISA plans are overseen by the federal government, **Chapter 2 led a coalition of Congressional Representatives, led by Congressman Tom Suozzi of Long Island, in calling for these plans to cover telehealth for at least 90 days**. This loophole was previously unrecognized by the federal government. The House of Representatives Ways and Means and Education and Labor Committees are actively including this directive in legislation at the time of this email update.
- We are in contact with Tanuja Mohapatra of the New York State Department of Financial Services to ensure compliance of state-regulated health plans with telehealth. **If you are denied payment for a telehealth visit during the pandemic, please contact us.**
- Last week, Chapter 2 member and Pediatric Pulmonologist **Dr. Melodi Pirzada** from NYU Winthrop Hospital **answered questions from the public live on News 12 Long Island**.
- **Dr. Eve Krief** also participated in a **“VIRTUAL TOWN HALL” on COVID-19 via Facebook LIVE**.
- Immediate Past President of New York Chapter 2, **Dr. Steve Goldstein, made an appearance on MSNBC** as one of several physicians **calling for increased access to PPE**.
- Through our partnership with State Senator Jim Gaughran, **our Chapter was THE STATE LEADER in ensuring that pediatric outpatient offices will qualify for Empire State Development and state Small Business Administration loans in New York.**

Until we brought this to the state's attention, there was no consideration given to whether outpatient medical practices (themselves small businesses) would qualify. Pediatric practices will be treated no differently than any other business and will be able to receive grants/loans based on their number of employees.

- The Chapter partnered with local Girl Scout Troops and **received donations of unsold Girls Scout Cookies** which have been delivered to children's hospitals within the Chapter.
- We are **considering starting a listserv**, similar to the popular listserv on the National AAP's Section on Practice Management, **to help area pediatricians dealing with any COVID-19 issues**. If you are interested in having the Chapter pursue this, please contact me or Jessica Geslani at [jgeslani@aap.org](mailto:jgeslani@aap.org)
- Don't forget to **read our Pediatric Blog on COVID-19 by Dr. Asif Noor**, available at: <http://ny2aap.org/category/blog/>

In the past few weeks, I've felt like the world is going crazy and tilting off its axis. Then I think about the vital role we play in the lives of our patients and families as we show up each day to care for children, all of whom – either directly or indirectly – have been impacted by this virus. It's a quick way to rejuvenate yourself before the next encyclopedia of regulations/policies/procedures arrives in your inbox.

As always, if there is anything more the Chapter could be doing to help pediatricians in this demanding time, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,  
Shetal Shah, MD, FAAP  
President, NYS AAP - Chapter 2

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## The NYS AAP - CHAPTER 2 is YOUR Local AAP Chapter

The New York State American Academy of Pediatrics (NYS AAP) is comprised of three local AAP Chapters, Chapters 1, 2, and 3, who work together as a coalition.

Your Chapter, the NYS AAP - Chapter 2, has 1,600 members in 4 counties: Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk.

To learn more about Chapter 2, please view our [Member Value Flyer](#) which describes the value of Chapter membership.

### **CONTACT US - (We'd love to hear from you!)**

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