



COVID-19: Update & Resources

April 8, 2020

Dear NYS AAP - Chapter 2 Member,

As the flurry of emails continue, I deliberately wanted to space out this latest update to give you a little more space to catch up on your inbox. Hopefully you are feeling more comfortable with our “new normal” of solitary walks, social distancing, constant news updates, and for those with school-age children - virtual school!

It's sad that it took this crisis, but the general public is finally beginning to understand the pivotal role we play in society. Hopefully you have all received some well-deserved appreciation from your neighbors, friends and colleagues. Let me add to that my immense gratitude for all the work pediatricians are doing to combat the pandemic. Thanks to all your efforts, the Chapter has been working at a feverish pace to assist you in all your work. This is what your Chapter and National AAP have been doing:

CHAPTER 2 & NATIONAL AAP UPDATES

- The National AAP summarized the relevant sections of the recent **Coronavirus Stimulus Bill** which passed the House of Representatives on March 27, 2020:
 1. **\$100 billion to hospitals** for Personal Protective Equipment, testing supplies, increased workforce training, and emergency operation centers
 2. **\$150 billion to states and localities** for COVID-19 response activities
 3. **\$377 billion in loan forgiveness grants, emergency grants, and Small Business Administration loans** to aid small businesses with fewer than 500 employees, including pediatric practices. (This is on top of the New York State small business grants for which pediatric practices are also eligible.)
- The Chapter has partnered with **Nassau County's** Office of Emergency Management to assist with **distribution of Personal Protective Equipment**. Pediatricians that provide care in Nassau can complete the short online form available here: <https://app.nassaucountyny.gov/OEM/supply-request/> to request equipment.
- At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, pediatricians in Chapter 2 realized that health plans covered under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (**ERISA**) were **NOT uniformly paying for telehealth visits**, financially impacting pediatricians and reducing healthcare access during a time of public health crisis for up 5-8% of children in our Chapter. Within **TWO WEEKS**, Chapter leaders brought this to the attention of Representative Tom Suozzi of New York 3rd Congressional District. As a member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, he was closely involved in reviewing pending COVID legislation. Based on discussions with Chapter 2, Rep. Suozzi urged members of the House Education and Labor Committee to ensure that federal legislation **REQUIRED** these plans to cover telehealth services for both adults and children. The measure passed into law on March 27, 2020 as part of the "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act" or CARES Act. **Chapter members should be**

proud of our role in detecting a loophole in federal policy and working expeditiously to close it in close partnership with our legislators. [Read the letter congratulating our Chapter on influencing national policy.](#)

- Virtually all **telehealth visits should be paid for at the minimum Medicaid rate**. If you are experiencing difficulty receiving payment for ANY pediatric telehealth visit, please contact Jessica Geslani at jgeslani@aap.org or Tanuja Mohapatra of the New York State Department of Financial Services at Tanuja.Mohapatra@dfs.ny.gov.
- The **Chapter has already distributed ~300 masks and other PPE to pediatricians across Long Island**. Through our strong partnership with legislators across New York, the Chapter obtained a small amount of standard (non-N95) facemasks for outpatient, private pediatric practices. The Chapter has stepped in to distribute about ~100 masks which general pediatricians can use to see children who require in-person visits in the office, thereby reducing the burden on emergency rooms. Contact Jessica Geslani if you require a portion of this allotment. As we receive more, we will be distributing it accordingly.
- The **Chapter has also sent letters to all 11 of the Chapter's federal representatives** outlining the dire need for personal protective equipment, faster roll-out of point-of-care testing for COVID-19, a national stay-at-home order, and increased enforcement of current regulations.

ADDITIONAL COVID UPDATES:

- The **NYS DOH's COVID-19 Weekly Healthcare Provider Update Compilation** provides healthcare providers in New York State with a consolidated update of guidance released by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) related to the COVID-19 pandemic response. [Click Here for this week's update.](#)
- **Raise the Age NY put out a call for help** in urging NY Governor Cuomo and NYC Mayor de Blasio to act quickly to reduce the risks to young people and families posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more and spread the word by using their [social media toolkit](#).

NON-COVID-RELATED NEWS:

US Census Video

Chapter members Dr. Eve Krief, Chairman of our Legislative Committee, and Dr. Sara Siddiqui, a Legislative Committee Member, appeared in video promoting completion of the United States Census. The full video appears at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTnZseKsBhs&feature=youtu.be>

Prohibition on the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products

As the New York State Legislature continued deliberations toward a final budget, the Chapter sent letters to 14 legislators describing the need to include a prohibition on the sale of flavored tobacco products in the legislation. Excluding the statewide March 3rd Advocacy Day, the Chapter has made over 40 in-person visits with state legislators this year along on this issue, both locally and in Albany.

I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT THIS MEASURE WAS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET PASSED ON APRIL 2nd!

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

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!)

President: Shetal Shah, MD, FAAP shetaldoc@hotmail.com

Vice President: Robert Lee, DO, FAAP rlee@aap.net

Secretary: Sanjivan Patel, MD, FAAP sapatel@wyckoffhospital.org

Treasurer: Pinchi Srinivasan, MD, FAAP nigdoc@gmail.com

Executive Director: Jessica Geslani jgeslani@aap.org

Director of Policy, Advocacy & External Relations: Elie Ward, MSW eward@aap.net

New York State American Academy of Pediatrics (NYS AAP) - Chapter 2
516-326-0310 | [Follow us on Twitter](#) | www.ny2aap.org

