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**Hospitals, Nursing Homes, and Other Healthcare Facilities Should Require COVID-19 Vaccinations for Employees**

*Statement released by seven leading organizations*

Columbia, MD – Despite the positive data, there are still many healthcare professionals who have declined to be vaccinated against COVID-19. AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine and six other leading national organizations today released a consensus statement saying that hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare facilities should require employees, as a condition of employment, to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The statement also supports COVID-19 vaccination of non-employees functioning at a healthcare facility, including students, contract workers, and volunteers. Exemptions from this policy apply to those with medical contraindications to all COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States (U.S.) and other exemptions specified in federal or state law.

The other participating organizations are the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), the Association for Professionals in Epidemiology and Infection Control (APIC), the HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA), the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS), and the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP). A panel consisting of representatives from the seven organizations conducted an eight-week review of evidence on the three vaccines authorized for use in the U.S., vaccination rates, and employment law, to develop the statement.

The statement explains what to consider in developing a policy of COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment, including ways to engage stakeholders and improve vaccination rates before implementing a policy of vaccination as a condition of employment, a thorough overview of current vaccines’ safety and efficacy, legal considerations, and advantages to having a fully vaccinated workforce.

Over 33 million Americans have contracted COVID-19 and more than 600,000 have died. The COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the U.S. have been found to be safe and effective in preventing infection and reducing transmission. Studies have demonstrated that the COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the U.S. also protect against variants, and are particularly effective against severe disease, hospitalization, and death.

The COVID-19 virus develops mutations when it replicates; since the vaccines prevent replication, these new variants can only emerge in an unvaccinated population. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the delta variant is now the dominant strain in the United States and represents more than half of new COVID-19 cases. More highly transmissible than previous variants, the delta variant – and other emerging variants – pose significant risk to people living in areas where vaccination rates are lower.

In addition to being more transmissible, the delta variant may also cause more severe disease. While more research is needed, [a recent study from Scotland](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2821%2901358-1/fulltext) showed the delta variant was about twice as likely as the alpha variant to result in hospitalization in unvaccinated individuals. Studies are showing lower protection with only one shot of the 2-dose mRNA vaccines, so full vaccination is vital to reduce risk of hospitalization and death.

“Unfortunately, many healthcare workers have still not taken the COVID-19 vaccination, which puts them and their patients at significant risk,” says AMDA Executive Director Christopher E. Laxton. “After other measures to improve vaccine uptake have not been effective, requiring vaccinations for all employees is the best way to ensure that everyone eligible will receive them in a timely manner. AMDA is proud to be part of this important effort.”

The complete statement can be found here:

https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/infection-control-and-hospital-epidemiology/article/multisociety-statement-on-covid19-vaccination-as-a-condition-of-employment-for-healthcare-personnel/690D1804B72FFF89C5FC0AED0043AD62

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AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine is the only medical specialty society representing the community of over 50,000 medical directors, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other practitioners working in the various post-acute and long-term care (PALTC) settings. Dedicated to defining and improving quality, we advance our mission through timely professional development, evidence-based clinical guidance, and tireless advocacy on behalf of members, patients, families, and staff. Visit [*www.paltc.org*](http://www.paltc.org) for more information.