



March 18, 2020

Dear UNM School of Medicine community,

As you all are aware, events and news related to COVID-19 continue to unfold rapidly.

The UNM School of Medicine leadership received new guidance from the Association of American Medical Colleges regarding medical students' clinical participation voicing "strong support for member schools enacting a temporary suspension in any activities that involve patient contact." UNM School of Medicine and UNM Health leadership have been in close and serious communication throughout the past few days. Together, we have made the following decision.

**Beginning at 5 PM today, Wednesday, March 18, all UNM medical students will be excused from participating in clinical care experiences and rotations. This pause will remain in effect for at least the next six weeks.**

**Students and clerkship directors will immediately begin the process of making Wednesday, March 18 the final day of clinical care.**

Difficult circumstances require leadership to make difficult decisions. We face multiple concerns that must be addressed in order to ensure our ability to care for our patients and protect all of us. Simultaneously we face three factors:

- We must preserve our supplies of PPE for our healthcare providers and workers on the front lines of patient care.
- Daily, the number of clinical sites capable of providing meaningful in person experiences for our students diminishes.
- Finally, and equally important, our ability to minimize COVID-19 transmission is critical and this decision will minimize transmission.

We are adjusting our curriculum for our third- and fourth-year students in order to ensure that your progression is not affected. Clerkship directors will communicate with students about continuing their education without direct patient contact to ensure they receive credit. What they are experiencing here is being experienced by all of their peers across the nation and world. We will get them through this, working together.

We are planning for our second-year students who will be starting Phase II clerkships in April, to begin those clerkships on time. As you know, the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve and we will inform our students and you promptly if there are any changes in those plans.

During this period, learning will not cease. Many opportunities for virtual learning, case simulations and additional venues exist for student participation. In addition, opportunities will be made available for students to contribute to addressing this global crisis. They will be receiving information from educational leadership and course, clerkship and rotation directors about how their learning will continue.

Medical school is not cancelled. Clinical education activity is paused. We will be working with financial aid, registrar and many others during this time.

Many of our amazing students have been asking how they can help during the crisis. We are so grateful to them. This takes all of us. More information will be forthcoming.

This is an extraordinary and unprecedented time for all of us. We care deeply about our students and their education and will do everything possible to continue to support them and be role models. It is a privilege to be in healthcare at

this unsettling time. There are resources for well-being during this time through the office of Professional Wellbeing. We encourage you to use those as you need.

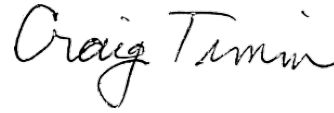
Sincerely,



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