AMSA believes that a robust response to this public health crisis is critical. We will all have a part to play - from incoming first-year medical school students to premedical students.

The Health Care Workforce
The pandemic has affected communities in very different ways. The response by health care systems will be different in each community. Medical students are playing a critical role in the response effort. AMSA believes:

- The safety of our health care providers must be our top priority to allow them to continue providing the highest quality of care to the influx of new patients. In the midst of a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), we must be thoughtful and efficient in their allocation, while advocating for more resources and protections for our providers.
- In communities where medical students have not been called to actively participate in clinical care, we can and have been contributing to the response in critical non-clinical capacities, providing childcare for frontline healthcare workers, collecting PPE donations, creating PPE, and advocating for policies to protect health workers and communities.
- Medical students in their pre-clinical training can continue building their base of clinical knowledge so they can be effective providers in the future.

→ Take action: use this script to call on your Senator to #GetUsPPE

Racism in the Government’s Response
AMSA strongly condemns the use of the term “Chinese coronavirus” and other racially-charged epithets in the government’s response to this crisis. The use of this term is not based in scientific reality or in good judgment and must be eliminated immediately. AMSA calls on other elected officials and leaders to join us in condemning this racist and xenophobic rhetoric surrounding COVID-19.

→ Take action: Sign on to our open letter to elected officials to condemn racist rhetoric and policies

Access to testing, treatments, and a vaccine
Through its Just Medicine campaign, AMSA has long acknowledged that as the primary funder of research and development of treatments, vaccines, and basic research, U.S. citizens deserve equitable access to these innovations. As a member of the Lower Drug Prices Now coalition, AMSA is fighting for affordable medications for all. AMSA calls for:

- Any treatment and/or vaccine that is found to be effective against COVID-19 be priced at an affordable level, covered by all private and public insurance entities, and that all efforts be made to ensure that there is universal access for all U.S. residents.
- The federal government to use its broad discretion in managing the global supply chain to ensure strong strategic stockpiles and universal access - whether through the
Defense Protection Act, compulsory licensing, or another mechanism - of key elements of a test, treatment, or vaccine

→ Take action: join us for a day of action on April 3 & join a digital town hall in your community

Impact on Students
Students have been negatively affected by school closures, suspension of clinical duties, and other actions. However medical students have demonstrated remarkable resolve and continued contributing in this critical time of need. As such, AMSA calls for:

- Suspending federal student loan collections for the duration of this crisis
- Up to $30,000 in debt forgiveness for students with federal loans
- Further opportunities for debt forgiveness for health professional students assisting in the COVID-19 response

The Potential for Voter Suppression
A number of states have enacted “states of emergency” which may have implications for upcoming elections. In this rapidly changing environment, there is potential for significant voter suppression - and particularly suppression disproportionately affecting certain groups. In conjunction with AMSA’s Med Out The Vote campaign, AMSA calls for:

- All efforts be made to facilitate voting procedures that maximize the number of citizens participating in the electoral process
- Funding for the Federal Election Commission, other federal entities, and state and local election authorities to develop procedures to ensure timely, safe, and robust elections
- Support for the National Defense and Emergency Ballot Act of 2020 which would expand options for voters to ensure they are able to participate in their civic duty

The Social Determinants of Health
AMSA has long advocated that the social determinants of health are as important to the health, safety, and well-being of our patients as their access to health care. AMSA calls for policies that:

- Ensure food security - whether through expanded access to food stamps, direct cash payments to individuals and families, or other nutrition assistance programs
- Eliminate fear of unwarranted eviction/foreclosure - including a 3-month nationwide moratorium on eviction, freeze on rent increases, and delay of mortgage payments
- Maintain access to basic utilities like energy, water, and internet access, preventing shut-offs

Access to Health Care For All
Since its inception, AMSA has called for universal access to health care through a robust, federally-funded, single-payer health care system. The current COVID-19 crisis has cast a harsh spotlight on the failings of our fragmented, profit-driven health care system. AMSA, through its Health Care For All campaign, renews its call for a robust federally-funded, single-payer system, with increased access and funding for Medicaid and Medicare in the meantime.