

## May 7: COVID-19 Clinical Update

### Impact on Medical Education

*This daily communication is intended to facilitate the sharing of important clinical information during the COVID-19 healthcare crisis and to help respond to questions from physicians across Northwestern Medicine.*

In today's issue, Diane B. Wayne, MD, vice dean of Education, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, and vice president of Human Resources, Northwestern Memorial HealthCare (NMHC), discusses the impact of COVID-19 on medical education.

#### **COVID-19 AND MEDICAL EDUCATION**

In mid-March, we faced an unprecedented disruption in clinical care and medical education. Almost overnight, Feinberg School of Medicine and NMHC made the decision to remove medical and NM Academy clinical school students from direct patient care, and to drastically revamp the clinical training of residents and fellows enrolled in graduate medical education programs throughout the health system.

Feinberg School of Medicine students did not sit idle. In addition to completing online coursework, medical students channeled their energy and drive to help the NM and Chicagoland communities address areas of need and persistent health disparities. They led PPE donation efforts, obtained grants, set up food drives, participated in patient education at community sites, worked with faculty to contact patients diagnosed with COVID-19 to assess clinical status, and made food and prescription deliveries to senior citizens and others needing help across Chicago.

Faculty members from multiple departments stepped forward to design new virtual electives on topics such as COVID-19, medical Spanish, medical humanities, medical education, virtual surgery, pathology and radiology. These offerings will enrich our medical school curriculum for many years to come.

While some residents and fellows remained on the front lines across NM — caring for patients and performing procedures in emergency departments, ICUs, COVID-19 units, oncology units, labor and delivery, operating rooms, and in post-acute care settings — others performed important continuity efforts through telemedicine and completed virtual consults remotely. All these efforts contributed to the continuation of the high-quality multidisciplinary care that our patients expect and deserve.

As we reflect on the past few weeks and look toward reopening, I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude. I'm grateful not only for the nurses, staff, attending physicians, residents and fellows on the front lines of patient care, but also for the approximately 200 faculty members who participated in faculty development courses on how to design interactive online teaching, the

dedicated clerkship and residency program directors who reimagined schedules and education delivery seemingly overnight, and the depth of the commitment across NM toward education even during incredibly trying and uncertain times.

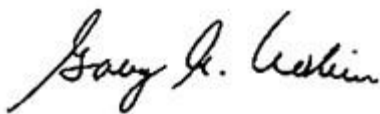
The next few weeks will certainly present challenges as we plan for and implement the re-entry of students and trainees into a dramatically changed clinical environment. However, we believe these challenges will be addressed and overcome through the careful planning, teamwork and patient-centered approach that defines Northwestern Medicine.

Additional information about these efforts and the impact of COVID-19 on medical education can be found in the following articles:

[Adapting the Education Centered Medical Home to the COVID-19 Crisis](#)  
[Medical Students Organize Volunteers to Help Community](#)  
[First-Year Student Helps Organize COVID-19 Student Volunteer Effort](#)

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Thank you to all NM physicians and clinicians for your ongoing collaboration and dedication to providing exceptional care during this unprecedented crisis. If you have questions or would like to share the story of an NM hero, please email us at [covid-19md@nm.org](mailto:covid-19md@nm.org).



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