

Regulatory Responses to COVID-19 Issues



March 18, 2020

COVID-19 Response



Kym Ayscough, Ahpra

Business Continuity Plan

- Business Continuity Planning Working Group (BCPWG)
 - ✓ WFH
 - ✓ Laptop deployment / BYOD
 - ✓ Business travel guidelines
 - ✓ Isolation leave
- Covid-19 information portal on intranet



Engagement with government – surge workforce capacity

- Registration priority professions
- Requirements for return to practice and/or re-deployment
- ‘Scoping up’ and ‘scoping down’ of practitioners
- Flexible application of regulatory standards, guidelines and procedures
- Other workforce categories – students and non registered practitioners



Clearing House Group (CHG)

- To address external, regulatory or policy-related queries
- Specific queries forming the basis of general advice to be published online, for example:
 - ✓ Fast-tracking registration
 - ✓ Redeploying IMGs
 - ✓ Interns meeting training requirements
 - ✓ Practitioner testing positive



Likely downstream regulatory issues

- Students graduated without required clinical hours
- Interns who have not completed required rotations
- Clinical placement shortage – 2+ years in one
- Doctors in training – unable to complete specialist exams and experience
- Treatment of complaints about decisions made during time of emergency



Contact Information

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COVID-19 Response



Ronne Hines, Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies

Colorado's Approach to Regulating State of Emergency

- Executive Order D2020 003 was issued on March 11, 2020, confirming the Governor's verbal declaration the day before of the existence of a Disaster Emergency, pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-704, in the State of Colorado and activating the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP).
- 24-33.5-701, C.R.S., et seq created the Office of Emergency Management and the Expert Emergency Epidemic Response Committee
- Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioner's Act, 12-29.3-101, C.R.S., et seq.



Colorado's Approach to Regulating State of Emergency

Creation of Joint Information Council

- Headed by Department of Public Health and Environment, Office of Emergency Management, and Governor's Office.
- Triage and approval process for all state communications to ensure consistent messaging.
- Twice weekly check in calls with updates on new guidance and information for state and local public information officers.





COLORADO

Department of
Regulatory Agencies

Division of Professions and Occupations

DORA working to increase available healthcare workforce for Coronavirus response

DENVER (March 13, 2020) - The Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) is implementing two initiatives to reduce the strain on the health care workforce as part of the state's ongoing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19, Governor Jared Polis announced at a [news briefing](#) Friday morning.

"In order to scale up our health care workforce capacity, I have asked the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies to cut through the red tape on licensing our medical professionals so that medical professionals - including pharmacists, nurses, doctors - who are licensed in other states but residing here can be immediately licensed in Colorado as quickly as possible to address this shortage," the Governor said at the Capitol.

The Division of Professions and Occupations (DPO), which falls under DORA's umbrella structure, today issued [guidance to qualified health care practitioners](#) who may not be licensed to practice in Colorado, but can take advantage of current statutory provisions and exemptions in order to immediately enter the workforce and assist in testing, treating, and caring for Colorado patients.

"DORA recognizes the need for qualified health care providers to assist in the testing, care, and treatment of Coloradans will only increase in the coming days and weeks," stated DORA Executive Director Patty Salazar. "These emergency provisions, ordered by Governor Polis, will enable providers from out of state, those not currently practicing - such as retired or semi-retired professionals, or those whose license may have expired - to provide much-needed support to our health care system."



Know existing flexibility – Guidance Issued to Healthcare Professionals

The State of Colorado is seeing an increasing demand for qualified healthcare professionals to assist in the testing, treatment, and care of patients with COVID-19. Under the direction of Governor Jared Polis, the Division of Professions and Occupations at the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) has conducted a review of existing licensing exemptions that allow for individuals in the healthcare field who either hold licenses in other states or who have allowed their license to expire in Colorado to immediately resume work within their scope of practice, provided their out-of-state or expired license is/was in good standing.

Healthcare providers who are being called upon to assist in caring for patients, but who are wondering if they can lawfully practice without a current Colorado license should consider exemptions and provisions that will allow them to immediately resume work in the field.



Expanding Impact

- Coordination with sister agencies to address impact promptly in state
- Education and outreach to healthcare professionals and consumers
- Support statewide response
- Employee response



Lessons Learning

- Utilize creation of emergency and continuity of operations plans
- Participation in national associations and compacts
- Understanding of existing flexibility in regulations
- Utilization of Executive Powers
- Existing relationships - local, state and federal



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COVID-19 WA State Response Update



Stephanie Mason, Washington Medical Commission

COVID-19 WA State Response Update – March 18, 2020

- Washington State Gov. Inslee state of emergency declaration and updates
- Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioner Act
 - ✓ IMLC
 - ✓ Chapter 70.15 RCW implementation
- WMC and DOH response
 - ✓ Staff
 - ✓ Challenges



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