

CORRECTION: In the previous email, a list of County Emergency Managers was included in the PPE information. However, you do **NOT** need to contact those individuals for PPE. You will need to only contact the regional emergency response coordinators.



COVID-19 Update, 3/17

March 17, 2020 | [ARKMED.org/covid19](https://arkmed.org/covid19)

Telemedicine Rules Relaxed

Late Friday afternoon (3/13), Governor Asa Hutchinson issued an Executive Order that relaxes the requirement for an in-person or interactive audio and video exam in order to establish a patient-doctor relationship. Physicians licensed in Arkansas who have access to a patient's personal health record "maintained by a physician" may establish the relationship through any means deemed appropriate by the physician, including the telephone. The order will stay in place for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency declaration. Prescribing scheduled drugs is still prohibited without first seeing the patient in person.

AMS was instrumental in getting the language added requiring access to an actual medical record rather than simply an online questionnaire. Also, AMS has been in touch with the administration to encourage a subsequent executive order requiring health plans to reimburse all phone call visits as a normal office visits (i.e. without needing to use telemedicine). We will continue to keep AMS members informed as we learn more.

Update on PPEs

Governor Hutchinson announced this morning (3/17) that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and is being distributed to health care workers. We have been in touch with the AR Department of Health and the AR Division of Emergency Management about how clinics can get PPE.

Here are instructions to submit a PPE request. This is being handled at the County and Regional Emergency Management level.

1. Determine your clinic's PPE needs. **HOWEVER: There's a limited supply of everything. Arkansas Department of Health suggested requesting TWO (2) N95 masks per staff member for the time being**, in addition to gowns, gloves, adult and pediatric ear-loop masks, eye protection, etc.
2. [Click Here to find your regional emergency response coordinator.](#)
3. **Call and/or email both** your regional coordinator to outline your clinic's needs.
4. Your county and regional coordinators individuals are your point people for follow-up on your request.

Scroll down to download public notice sign for your clinic.

AMS Annual Membership Meeting Has Been Cancelled

Physicians are on the front lines of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. As an organization of physicians, the AMS has an obligation to help slow the spread of the virus. Recommendations to avoid large gatherings are changing daily with initial thresholds set at 200, then reduced to 100, and now to 50.

Based upon the most current information, the AMS Executive Committee has determined it necessary and prudent to cancel the May 1st AMS Annual Membership Meeting.

The Inaugural Gala honoring incoming president Chad Rodgers, MD will be rescheduled, possibly in conjunction with the summer Board of Trustees meeting.

COVID-19 Test Availability from AR Department of Health

Commercial labs, such as LabCorp, Quest, and Roche, now provide COVID-19 testing. Health care providers intending to test their patients for COVID-19 should obtain the requirements for specimen collection, storage, and shipping from the commercial lab that they plan to use.

Due to limited supply of tests at our Public Health Laboratory, the ADH is prioritizing the testing of patients who are:

1. Part of the cohort of known contacts of positive cases that we are actively following, or
2. Require a rapid diagnosis because they are hospitalized with significant symptoms, in the intensive care unit, or reside in an institutional facility (i.e., long-term care, correctional facility, etc.).

If you have a patient who you think meets criteria for testing at ADH, please call 1-800-803-7847 and identify yourself as a physician needing assistance.

[Click here to read the rest of the Specimen Collection Guide \(3/13/20\).](#)



Medical Meetings **Cancelled:**

**AMS State Medical
Organizations Group**
March 18, Little Rock

**AR Dermatological Society
Annual Meeting**
April 4-5, Hot Springs

**AR Pain Management
Symposium**
April 25, Little Rock

AR MGMA
April 29-30, Little Rock

**AMS Annual Membership
Meeting**
May 1, Little Rock



Signage for Clinics

Download the public notice sign that we have developed for our member clinics. Post this sign at your clinic entrances or feel free to share on your websites.

- [COVID-19 Sign for Clinics PDF](#)
- [COVID-19 Sign for Clinics Word](#)

You can also find additional information for steps healthcare facilities can take to prepare for COVID-19 on the [CDC website](#).