

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Values. Ethics. Advocacy.

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Statement attributable to Benjamin C. Aaker, MD, SDSMA president:

SDSMA Statement on White House Coronavirus Task Force Recommendations

A report from the White House Coronavirus Task Force this week recommends that South Dakota implement aggressive promotion of “social distancing and use of face coverings, particularly in indoor settings, statewide.”

In agreement with the report, the SDSMA believes the state must do more, and we continue our call for more aggressive measures to help stop the spread of COVID-19. We urge the governor to issue a statewide mask mandate, and in the current absence of a statewide mandate, we urge local government ordinances requiring mask wearing.

We also urge the public to wear masks in public in addition to other measures including washing hands often, using hand sanitizer and not touching your eyes, nose or mouth; not gathering in indoor groups of people outside your household; maintaining a 6-foot distance from others, and staying home when sick or exposed to the virus. We urge the public to follow these precautions to prevent infections and slow hospitalizations to avoid overwhelming our health systems and to avoid a situation where there are not enough hospital beds, physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals.

The appropriate actions by state and local elected leaders can prevent COVID-19 infections and deaths among our neighbors, our friends, and our families. A vaccine is almost here, but for now, following these recommendations is critical.