


SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Values. Ethics. Advocacy.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Elizabeth Reiss
Director of Communications
South Dakota State Medical Association
605-336-1965
ereiss@sdsma.org

SDSMA Urges Stronger State Response to COVID-19

Gov. Noem must order closure of nonessential businesses and order suspension of nonessential surgeries and procedures

MARCH 26, 2020 – SIOUX FALLS – The South Dakota State Medical Association strongly urges Gov. Kristi Noem to do the following, in the interest of keeping the public safe and to slow the spread of the coronavirus. South Dakota **must do more**.

- Order closure of nonessential businesses in South Dakota to prevent community spread.
- Suspend all nonessential elective surgeries as well as procedures, and prohibit payment for these surgeries and procedures, to prevent spread and to conserve precious medical equipment and resources. It is key that the governor provide further direction to the public and health facilities and define the types of surgeries and procedures that are considered nonessential as laid out in our recommendations in the attached letter.

“The COVID-19 pandemic presents an unprecedented challenge to our state and we must take proactive steps to prevent further community spread,” said Dr. Robert Summerer, SDSMA president.

The SDSMA’s full letter to Gov. Noem is included in this email.

In addition, the SDSMA urges all people in South Dakota to stay home and has written an open letter to the public about the importance of staying home signed by SDSMA and other leading health organizations in South Dakota (a copy of the letter is included in this email). Staying home is key to closing the spread and gives physicians, nurses and everyone on the front lines a fighting chance at having the equipment, time and resources necessary to take on this immense challenge. That’s why we are urging the public to stay home as we reach the critical stages of our response to this crisis. “The physicians of South Dakota are honored to serve and put our lives on the front line to protect and save as many lives as possible but we need the public’s help and that means staying home.”

The SDSMA serves physicians, residents and medical students who are dedicated to the health of South Dakotans. The mission of the SDSMA is to promote the art and science of medicine, protect and improve the health of the public, and advocate for the well-being of physicians and patients and the best environment for physicians to advance quality health care. Learn more about the SDSMA at www.sdsma.org.