



May 14, 2020

To ESC Medical Professionals:

We write today with these updates:

**1. Care delivery in the new "normal."** The Union's first and foremost priority is to ensure that our medical professionals have a safe workplace. As our employers begin to consider what operations will look like in the new normal created by a world with COVID-19, we will be actively representing our members as plans are made and implemented. Our union has the right to bargain over safety and major changes to work conditions, and we will be exercising these rights.

To do this effectively, we are gathering information from all of you -- we need to know your thinking about what it will take to deliver care safely, moving forward.

For example, at Kaiser, ESC Local 20 represents Home Health Therapists. These members are Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Therapists who do home visits to work with patients, most of whom have been discharged recently from acute care. To best understand what our Home Health Therapists need to do their work safely now and going forward, we have pulled together a group of stewards to discuss and analyze the work conditions that are evolving across the Kaiser system.

Through such discussions, we have started to identify the issues that need to be bargained with the employer. These include the following: protocols for identifying patients who are recovering from COVID-19 or are PUI for COVID-19; appropriate PPE and distancing in the home for the Therapist, the patient, and family members; appropriate practices for treating patients in skilled nursing or assisted living facilities; hygiene and cleaning practices; adjustments to work times and scheduling to allow for execution of heightened safety protocols; and when and how video or telephonic treatment is appropriate and can substitute for a home visit.

While every workplace and every discipline will have unique questions and issues to consider, we anticipate similar discussions for many of our professionals as "normal" care

resumes. Your union leaders and staff representatives will be asking for your input as we work through these matters. We encourage broad involvement as our frontline workers know best what is happening and what is needed. **As always, if you believe there is a safety issue in your workplace, call your union representative.**

**2. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.** Some of our members have been losing hours as they are "flexed off" because of lessened patient loads. For those who have lost income due to the pandemic, California is now accepting applications for relief under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Information can be found here: [https://edd.ca.gov/about\\_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm](https://edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm)

**3. ESC Local 20 Virtual Annual Meeting on May 21, @7 pm.** The Union's Annual Meeting is moving to Zoom this year and you are cordially invited to attend! This will be a quick hour together to review the past year's actions and financials, and give updates to the members on the current work of our local in response to the pandemic. Please RSVP here: <https://www.ifpte20.org/2020-annual-meeting/>

In solidarity,

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