

ENGAGING MSAs DURING COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many stalled or cancelled engagement activities. Here are some tips for MSAs to continue to support engagement and functioning during the barriers that COVID-19 presents to the traditional MSA model and existing strategic plans.

Reasons to Engage

- **Strategic goals may have changed due to possible shifting priorities.** Ensure new priorities are made clear amongst your MSA. Strong leadership is important to ensure well defined and well communicated priorities. Example activities: A strategic review in a working group meeting to review goals, activities that are planned, complete, active, cancelled or on hold, or the development of a MSA communication booklet with strategic priorities.

Methods to Connect

- **Host virtual or outdoor engagement activities in lieu of in-person meetings** to bring together MSA members and increase inter-specialty collaboration if applicable. Examples: Virtual team building exercises, virtual physician lounge meetings, virtual training or simulation.
- **Host regular MSA-HA COVID-19 meetings via Zoom.** Example: Weekly video-conference meetings with MSA executives and health authority representatives to provide status updates and address challenges.
 - Review to Zoom's [Running Engaging Online Events Guide](#) to ensure your events are informative, interactive and engaging.
- **Utilize an online central communication platform** where pertinent information for physicians is housed in one place to prevent information overload. Example: Some medical staff groups have added the SLACK platform to augment health authority channels, for virtual town hall meetings, case number reporting, wellness resources, specific project groups and supported by other information-sharing approaches such as email. Another central communication platform would be your MSA's website. Some MSAs are also sending out regular COVID-19 communications in partnership with the health authority (e.g., COVID-19 case counts, important clinical and operational information, etc.)
- **Dedicate MSA resources to supporting MSA executives to engage with wider MSA.** Example: MSA executives taking on an active role in ensuring all members have appropriate engagement in the COVID-19 operations.

Effective Information Sharing

- **Break down engagement opportunities in bite sized pieces** so that doctors don't have to commit much time and brain space while they are prioritizing COVID-19 response and planning. Example: Infographic for quick interpretation of data, processes, or relationships, or a 15 minute Zoom pop-in.
- **Be selective about what information you share.** Ensure information you share is relevant to physicians, and provides practical value and compelling reasons for them to get involved. Also, be clear about WHY they should take time to engage in a) this activity, and b) what you are asking them to do. Focus on what matters to your physicians. Use this time to invest in activities (e.g., wellness, burnout) that are important to physician resiliency. Also consider revisiting successes and sharing the wins with stakeholders. Example: Share compelling reasons why your MSA's engagement work will/has improved patient care, their practice, and their work environment.
- **Avoid e-mail spam and information overload.** E-mail can be missed during challenging times, so consider holding short face-to-face (usually via Zoom) meetings.