

ASA / NCCAOM Town Hall V Q&A

April 29, 2020, 5pm PDT/8pm EDT

[Video Recording](#)

[PowerPoint Slides](#)

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PROFESSION RELATED QUESTIONS

Emergency Room (ER)

Question: What are the discharge guidelines for patients? Are they re-tested before they are released to ensure they test negative?

Answered on 5/04/20: Discharge instructions entail rest, fluids, proper germ management, monitoring of symptoms (including regularly taking your temperature), and quarantining. Positive patients generally do not receive follow-up testing. They are informed to monitor their symptoms, especially respiratory and temperature, and to follow up with their physician or return to the ER if things worsen.

Question: What symptoms are you screening for besides the fever (taking temp)? What symptoms are red flags?

Answered on 5/04/20: We ask if they are aware of any possible exposures to anyone with COVID-19. Symptoms are similar to some other viral infections, although they can be more severe, particularly respiratory: fever (> 100°), chills, cough, sore throat, SOB, body aches. If they present with such symptoms, they are triaged as a COVID patient and sent for testing to rule it out.

Question: What has been the average length of stay for patients being admitted?

Answered on 5/04/20: As of May 6th, the average length of stay in the hospital is 11 days and the average length of stay in the ICU is 12 days.

Question: What has follow-up testing been like for positive cases?

Answered on 5/04/20: Positive patients generally do not receive follow-up testing. They are informed to monitor their symptoms and follow up with their physician or return to the ER if things worsen.

Question: How can we connect to local hospital ER to help patients with Chinese medicine? We try to find the entrance to help.

Answered on 5/04/20: I appreciate the enthusiasm, but this unfortunately is not realistic at this time. Acupuncturists are still not well established within conventional medicine structures. There is much that needs to be done before this can be a consideration.

Question: I am finding this very interesting, especially because we will be treating people who have been patients at the ER or treating the nurses and doctors. This is giving us an idea of what patients and health care providers are going through. I have read stories and listened to NPR, but to walk through it feels relevant. Just my opinion.

Answered on 5/04/20: You're welcome. We hope it shed some light.

Question: In my opinion, it would be better to see what acupuncturists in Michigan can do for these other healers. Help the Stress. Help the Depression. The whole world is affected, and we have similar problems in MN. Help us find solutions. Everything else we can find online to learn what is happening in the world. And tell us options what we can do for the PTSD that will be showing up, soon.

Answered on 5/04/20: Thank you for your feedback and attendance. The ER perspective was a heavily requested topic. We understand it is not the most directly relevant, but important, nonetheless. Despite the various news sources, it can be difficult for some who reside in lesser affected areas or practice in a non-hospital setting, to appreciate the gravity of the situation. This presentation hopefully reveals that not only do patients and family members need support during this time, but also our fellow healers, as you have suggested.

Question: Thank you for the first two front line practitioners' presentation. I wonder how you deal with the mental crisis yourself or your colleagues? Any resources available? Thank you for your work.

Answered on 5/04/20: You're welcome. I have personally been managing fine but thank you for asking. Some health systems have provided supportive services for employees, such as Henry Ford's emotional support 24-hour hotline.

Question: Are these photos verified or is this more fear mongering again is this relevant to us acupuncturist. I can hear this on the news.

Answered on 5/04/20: If you are referring to the deceased storage photos -- they were taken from local news station websites but have made their rounds internationally. I can appreciate the skepticism, but to clarify, the photos are not intended to create fear. They are to illustrate the reality many communities are experiencing. It is not unique to or necessarily indicative of poor practice, but rather a symptom of how overwhelming the circumstances are, especially for less equipped systems. The structural, PPE, and support photos were personally taken.

Question: Would there be more in demand of Acupuncturists in the hospital setting after this pandemic is over? Especially the use for mental, pain, and the usage of herbal medicine?

Answered on 5/04/20: I imagine this largely depends on how acupuncturists choose to position and present themselves afterwards. An understanding of how to properly integrate into the hospital system and communicate within that structure would be imperative.

Question: Does your state have walk-up testing for anyone?

Answered on 5/04/20: Henry Ford offers "drive-thru" testing. Other systems offer similar options, as well.

Question: Since the family has been together all the time, why do you restrict the parents? That seems to draconian.

Answered on 5/04/20: It is to minimize the vector pool.

Question: Do your nurses have fresh non-surgical masks every day?

Answered on 5/04/20: I cannot speak to the supply on the floors, but between current stock and donations, we had enough surgical masks with judicious use. We do not have as much flexibility with respirators.

Question: What has been the impact of COVID in long term care facilities?

Answered on 5/04/20: Unfortunately, I do not know.

Question: Was your PPE shortages because of the lack of planning of the hospital?

Answered on 5/04/20: No, this is not unique to our hospital system. There is a national shortage of PPE.

Question: Do you see this crisis as a catalyst for health care systems reforming the level of staffing in the future. In Winter Park FL they are also asking OB nurses to float between COVID patients and back again to OB with insufficient PPE.

Answered on 5/04/20: I would certainly hope so. This should be treated as a "rehearsal" for the potential of something worse in the future.

Question: Do residents in Michigan have access to telemedicine so they do not get exposed to COVID.?

Answered on 5/04/20: They do. Many physicians in the health system have transitioned to telehealth during this time.

Question: What is the situation in the rural parts of Michigan? How are those locations managing their patients?

Answered on 5/04/20: I can only speak to Detroit, which is the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic in Michigan. This map may be helpful and reveals that COVID in the rural areas (further north) is relatively minimal.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=Glh7FSXXej8&feature=emb_logo

Question: What was the level of testing for staff?

Answered on 5/04/20: I do not know, but they were not tested by default. Universal precautions adjusted for the crisis were taken by staff regardless. If a staff member was exhibiting any symptoms, they stayed home.

Question: Does contact with the deceased put attendants in danger of COVID transmission too? We know that heat kills the virus. How does cold affect the virus?

Answered on 5/04/20: There has been mixed information about the deceased as vectors. I do not know what the most current data suggests.

Question: First off Z, thank you for your generous spirit and showing up. My question is about what to believe about what we hear in terms of pts death rate. In your experience would you please address if it overwhelmingly people over 60 with underlying conditions or is more nuanced than that? It would be helpful to get real data.

Answered on 5/04/20: Thank you for the kind words. My observations were consistent with what the data suggests -- it affects and is more fatal in older populations. In conversations I had with first medical responders, they have been getting more calls to retrieve deceased from homes. They believe this is related to the ill choosing to stay at home, rather than be isolated in the

hospital. Some food for thought, as this may affect data. You may find this link helpful:

<https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-COVID-19-Death-Counts-by-Sex-Age-and-S/9bhg-hcku>

Question: ER + COVID means we need a test that can be administered with immediate results(ish) so it is clear whether the person has COVID or not, even if they are also having a heart attack (for example). Do we have that test? Without it, how do we create a safe space in hospitals? "

Answered on 5/04/20: The turnaround time for COVID testing was around 12 hours. More test kits are being developed that are approaching the immediate results you are inquiring about. I do not know the accuracy of these faster tests. Creating a "safe space" in hospitals, especially under such circumstances, is next to impossible. This is a big reason why visitor restrictions are as strict as they are -- to minimize the vector pool.

Question: Is there a way or process for Licensed Acupuncturists to help at hospitals even if it is for testing and/or screening?

Answered on 5/04/20: This is unlikely for those outside of the system. My circumstances were unique for an acupuncturist, as I'm an employee of the hospital and was redeployed within the system given my prior ER experience. There were solicitations for volunteers for a state stationed field hospital that was set up at the TCF Center. A dually licensed colleague of mine inquired about volunteering at said hospital, but was declined, since she had not practiced as a nurse in the past three years. While there may be opportunities, there may also be very specific criteria.

COVID-19 Registry Project

Question: Ryan, how long will the registry be live and able to be added to?

Answered on 5/04/20: I do not have an end-date in mind.

Question: In regard to the COVID-19 support registry, if we do not have a case to contribute to the registry can we still have access to the data for research purposes?

Answered on 5/04/20: ASA is working with NUNM with a "Memorandum of Understanding" regarding access to the data. ASA will share out information as it is approved and available.

Reopening

Question: What, if any, advice first presenters have for those of us that are looking to reopen our clinics?

Answered on 5/04/20: This very topic will be addressed during the May 6th town hall.

Direct, Ethics, & Treatments

Question: How many hours for PPE used?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Acupuncturists should wear PPEs for the entirety of their time spent with patients.

Question: Are acupuncturists considered essential in NYS?

Answered on May 8, 2020: At this time, it is unclear if acupuncturists in NYS are considered essential. You may need to refer to your local health authority, as cases in upstate New York are quite different from NYC. [NYS remains on PAUSE until May 15.](#)

Question: Can we have a joint effort to propose a studying of acupuncture or herbs on treating COVID 19 patients? Who is working on a Randomized controlled trial study to evaluate the effectiveness of acupuncture/herbs? Can we set up a facility that only treats COVID 19+ patients with acupuncture/herbs (non-hospitalized)?

Answered on May 8, 2020: ASA is watching for research studies. There are some studies collecting data. Please participate in the [NUNM Registry](#) to enter your clinical experience. We encourage you to be a support for your patients at this time using telehealth when appropriate.

Question: Has there been any data about same covid-19 symptoms beyond that 30 days that Ms. Morris some of with rebound? Once completely healed, is the person who has had covid-19, immune to getting it again?

Answered on May 8, 2020: We are awaiting more data regarding this. Please stay aware of updates from the CDC and local health authorities.

Question: Any input on UV machines for the office when we reopen?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Some hospitals are using UV to clean their equipment. Frequency of wavelength and exposure time is important. Please review the manufacturers guidelines.

Question: Thank you for the excellent presentation. Do any of the presenters have any opinions or advice regarding acupuncture offices reopening? I would like to hear their perspectives based on being inundated with COVID.

Answered on May 8, 2020: Please watch [our May 6th Town Hall](#) featuring Valerie Hobbs and Steve Shomo on return to work recommendations. Also, please review the [CCAOM Clinical Advisory](#) recommendations.

Question: Our state of Ohio is beginning to reopen this Friday with masks being "highly recommended". However, with the shortage of PPE, do we know if there will be ways to have the masks reused? I know Battelle are cleaning masks for first responders and those on the front-lines. Are there any indications that this service will include small clinics?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Here are the [guidelines for reuse of N95 respirators](#) by the CDC. Here are the [CDC's recommendation to optimize facemasks](#). Acupuncturists can use simple surgical face masks. These are available through our vendors.

Question: I am hearing a lot of other services/surgeries being postponed due to being listed as merely 'essential'. This also goes for services involving cancer care. How exactly are they determining what is/isn't essential?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Essential service is determined by state and local authorities. Please contact your local health department for more information.

Question: With allergy season and the symptoms being of a wide range, plus many being asymptomatic, what are we looking for to determine if a client should be referred for the COVID test? Is there a major cardinal sign you are looking for, such as SOB or high fever?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Testing will depend on your local health authority. The CDC has a [self-symptom checker](#) that you can review. We are advising practitioners to be aware of temperatures of 100.5 F

Question: Please tell us what pre-screening questions you are asking considering strokes & neurological potential in COVID. I am interested in how this applies to potential states re-opening clinics. What are the specific guidelines regarding PPE (for practitioners & patients), testing, contract tracing...how do we ensure that we keep our patients & ourselves safe?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Please watch [our May 6th Town Hall](#) featuring Valerie Hobbs and Steve Shomo on return to work recommendations. Also, please review the [CCAOM Clinical Advisory](#) recommendations. We should treat all patients and practitioners as if they are silent carriers.

Question: Many acupuncturists want an essential worker designation. What does "essential" actually mean, and what kind of training is needed to qualify for this designation? What kind of teamwork is required? What level of responsibility is an acupuncturist willing to assume?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Essential status is determined by your local authority. Acupuncturists must assume that all patients and practitioners are both silent carriers. Those providing essential treatments should be providing emergency treatments. [Please review our ASA Essentials Letter.](#)

Question: Are there any guidelines regarding face masks?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Practitioners should wear surgical masks when they are with patients. N95 masks are not necessary unless working with a patient with possible respiratory conditions. Patients may wear cloth masks.

Question: Should patients be wearing masks during the tx and on the table or only provider?

Answered on May 8, 2020: Patients and practitioners should always have their facemasks on when they are together. Patients should keep their masks on, for the duration of their time in your office.

Question: My next question is regarding patients who take public transportation- Some want to and sometimes must wait in the waiting area for hour or longer. Any suggestions how to address this type of situation. I do not want to be rude or insensitive, but I believe we need to follow the social distancing rules to protect other patients and myself.

Answered on May 8, 2020: Patients should always adhere to physical distancing practices. We are responsible for the wellbeing of our patients, including those who are seen before and after the patients who may need to wait in your waiting area. Please consult your malpractice insurance provider.

Question: Please try to cover issues like PPE, COVID-19-related patient consent forms, insurance, and other legal issues, and many more. I think that the issue of safety and liability in this new reality needs at least the same level of attention that you have (justifiably) given to the PPP/EIDL loans and related financial advice.

Answered on May 8, 2020: Please watch [our May 6th Town Hall](#) featuring Valerie Hobbs and Steve Shomo on return to work recommendations. Also, please review the [CCAOM Clinical Advisory](#) recommendations. We will also be hosting a Town Hall featuring 2 of our Malpractice Insurance carriers regarding issues related to COVID-19 in the coming week.

Question: I know many acupuncturists work for themselves, but I am a W-2 employee and cannot control each aspect of my job. My employer recently mentioned that when we do go back to work, we may sanitize masks so they can be reused - just an example - I do not know if these kinds of practices are recommended. Also, I work in a state that is not opening yet - what should employees look out for guidance if their employers decide to chart their own path? If providers are seeing more than one patient at a time, presumably PPE needs to change between each patient - would love to know all this entails.

Answered on May 8, 2020: Please watch [our May 6th Town Hall](#) featuring Valerie Hobbs and Steve Shomo on return to work recommendations. Also, please review the [CCAOM Clinical Advisory](#) recommendations. Please consult your malpractice insurance carrier for more specifics on opening before your state allows. Here are the [guidelines for reuse of N95 respirators](#) by the CDC. Here are the [CDC's recommendation to optimize facemasks](#).

NCCAOM CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

Note: The NCCAOM application for certification and recertification must be submitted through your [NCCAOM online portal](#). All Diplomates are required to report their continuing education for recertification electronically in their NCCAOM online portal. Continuing education reporting instructions are available [here](#).

Certification

Question: Do I have to keep re-applying, or Is my initial application still pending?

Answered on 5/04/20: An NCCAOM application for certification is valid for four (4) years from the date the application is submitted. Any candidate who does not complete the certification process in four years must reapply to continue to meet all certification requirements.

Recertification

Question: Do all of these Town Hall webinars provide NCCAOM PDAs if you are a registered participant?

Answered on 5/04/20: Each ASA / NCCAOM Town Hall Webinar earns a Diplomate two (2) PDA points towards recertification. To date all certificates have been issued in the domain of core competency. There is no maximum limit to the total number of PDA points in one

recertification cycle for PDA points earned in the core competency domain. Each PDA certificate lists the domain area met for recertification.

Any NCCAOM Diplomate who is registered under their own name with accurate information in the First Name and Last Name field (first and last name only without credentials as recorded on your NCCAOM portal) will have their earned PDA points entered directly to the Diplomate's recertification transcript using the new NCCAOM CE Banking system approximately 2 weeks after the Town Hall. The NCCAOM is working with each PDA Provider so that all will eventually be using the new CE Banking system.

Other Topics

Question: Is there a list of future Townhall topics we can see? If not, where do we send topic suggestions?

Answered on 5/04/20: You may enter suggested topics for future ASA / NCCAOM Town Hall webinars on the post meeting survey which pops up on your screen after each meeting. Or, send suggestions to covid19alerts@thenccaom.org.

We do not have a list of all future Town Hall meeting topics. You can find the information for the upcoming Wednesday Town Hall a week before the meeting date by clicking on the *Latest News* banner on the NCCAOM website www.nccaom.org and choosing the NCCAOM - ASA Weekly Town Hall (date) which will bring you to the registration page that contains the meeting topic(s) to be presented.

ADVOCACY / CARES ACT

Unemployment

Question: How many weeks will we receive the \$600/week?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: The additional \$600/week runs through July 31, 2020.

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

Question: Can you give examples of how to use both PPP and EIDL loans so they will both be forgiven?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: You can have your PPP loan forgiven if you use 75 percent of your loan for payroll maintenance within eight weeks of receiving your PPP loan. You can apply for the EIDL advance, which is automatically forgiven (think of it as a grant). If you apply for EIDL funds beyond the advance, you will be required to repay that loaned amount -- there is no option for EIDL loan forgiveness outside of the advance.

Question: If you pay yourself with a paycheck and are an S-Corp and take 2/3 of your income from the S-Corp in addition to the paycheck how do you claim that salary with the PPP?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: Check with the financial institution you are using to apply for the PPP loan. They will be able to advise you on the appropriate documentation.

Question: If we do not have payroll as a small business, what shall we do when applying the PPP?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: The SBA will use your most recent tax returns to determine your income -- consult the financial institution you are working with to apply for the PPP to confirm that specific income documentation if you don't have a payroll.

Question: Can you please clarify the guidelines regarding using EIDL loan/grant funds and PPP funds received for different things?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: You cannot use EIDL and PPP funds for the same purposes, so if you have used EIDL funds for payroll, you would need to use the PPP to refinance the EIDL to receive forgiveness for your PPP loan.

Question: What was the website to check for PPP Loan and PUA eligibility for each state?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: You can find state PUA eligibility and additional PUA guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor:

<https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus/unemployment-insurance#find-state-unemployment-insurance-contacts>

SBA Business Loans

Question: Do you know if a new licensed acupuncture practice that wants to open a practice once allowed, is there financial support since i did not have a previous clinic in service.

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: If you are seeking financial support through the CARES Act, that support will depend on whether you can demonstrate that COVID-19 interrupted or prevented you from working. You will need to show that documentation and have proof of an established business. There may be relief options for you through your state's pandemic unemployed insurance policy as well. Each state has different eligibility criteria, so check your state's specific policy.

Question: The Small Business Administration web site crashed under the weight of inquires of lenders. Is it fixed?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: The SBA website is receiving a large amount of traffic due to the high demand of the PPP and EIDL. It should be back up and running. Keep trying.

Question: If you have a choice of lenders, is it better to go through a national bank? It seems like in the first run, the businesses that succeeded did that instead of going through a local bank.

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: It depends -- many larger banks have limited bandwidth to process PPP applications due to high demand. It may be a good idea to work through a small bank, which may not have as many applications to process.

Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL)

Question: Can you give examples of how to use both PPP and EIDL loans so they will both be forgiven?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: You can have your PPP loan forgiven if you use 75 percent of your loan for payroll maintenance within eight weeks of receiving your PPP loan. You can apply for the EIDL advance, which is automatically forgiven (think of it as a grant). If you apply for EIDL funds beyond the advance, you will be required to repay that loaned amount -- there is no option for EIDL loan forgiveness outside of the advance.

Question: If you have applied for the EIDL at the beginning of April but did not receive funds but did receive the grant -do you need to reapply?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: Yes -- try reapplying and indicating that you are applying for the advance. The EIDL application now asks if the applicant is interested in applying for the EIDL advance.

Question: It has been 2-3 weeks since I submitted my EIDL application which was accepted. When can I expect to hear?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: The Small Business Association had to stop processing all applications until Congress replenished the EIDL funding pool, so this likely delayed your receiving funds. We do not have an estimate of when you will receive your loan but do know that since you received confirmation of approval, it is coming.

Question: What can you use the EIDL for so that it is a forgiveness loan?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: The EIDL advance is a grant, so it is automatically forgiven. If you do receive the advance, you do not have to show how you use it to receive forgiveness. EIDL funds beyond the advance are not forgiven and must be repaid at 3.75 interest, with a 12-month repayment deferral.

Question: Can you please clarify the guidelines regarding using EIDL loan/grant funds and PPP funds received for different things?

Answered on 5/04/20 – M. Giammarco, MPP: You cannot use EIDL and PPP funds for the same purposes, so if you have used EIDL funds for payroll, you would need to use the PPP to refinance the EIDL to receive forgiveness for your PPP loan.