

## President's Message

We are caught in a crossroads as we decide how to re-open our communities as safely as possible. Although continuing to isolate and observe safer-at-home practices will decrease the spread of coronavirus, the faltering economy necessitates an eventual relaxing of these restrictions. The question is when and how we should do so. Epidemiologists have suggested that four criteria must be met before we can re-open:

- The number of new cases must decline for at least two consecutive weeks
- The capacity must be available to perform contact tracing on every new case that appears
- Tests must be available to diagnose anyone with symptoms
- The health care system must have the capacity to treat all patients, not just those with COVID-19

At this time in Los Angeles County, the number of new cases of COVID-19 continues to increase, indicating that it is not yet time to stop our safer-at-home policies. I do not envy the health officials who have to decide our next steps.

The AAP has put out several guidances recently, including [Guidance on Providing Pediatric Ambulatory Services via Telehealth During COVID-19](#) and [COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Return to In-Person Education in Schools](#). These are just two recent examples of articles available through the AAP's Pediatrics COVID-19 Collection. I encourage you to peruse these articles and stories online on the AAP website for the latest information on [COVID-19 and children](#).

We have included two articles from chapter members related to COVID-19: one from UCLA med-peds resident [Marguerite Thorp](#) on the clinical presentation of COVID-19 in children and one from Chapter Immunization Champion [Candace Gragnani](#) on the importance of well-child visits and immunizations during this pandemic. As Los Angeles County Department of Public Health officials determine when and how we are going to re-open the county, they are sure to prioritize catching up missed immunizations in infants and children from the past few months.

Our ACEs and COPAM committees have collaborated to create a [survey](#) which I encourage you to complete. It will take just a few minutes of your time and will give our chapter leadership important information on how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting your practice. We want to hear from all of you, including those who are struggling to keep your practice afloat, and especially if you are imminently going to have to close your practice. We have partnered with the California Medical Association to provide support through information and technical guidance for any practice in dire financial straits.

Please also read the [advocacy update](#) from Kris Calvin, the Executive Director of District IX AAP and State Government Affairs representatives Marti Baum and Susan Wu. Kris and our State

Government Affairs committee are working tirelessly to advocate on behalf of pediatricians for parity in telehealth payment, particularly for well-child visits, among other issues.

A few non-COVID related updates—I'm pleased to announce that Early Career Physicians (ECP) representative Christine Thang is leading a new committee to oversee the content of our newsletter. We want to make sure that our publication is meeting the needs of our members and provides informative articles as well as a forum to network and bring together chapter members with similar interests. We now have active committees working on Immigrant Child Health, ACEs, practice management and membership, along with champions on immunizations, climate change, community pediatrics (CATCH) and early childhood development. Over the next few months, we hope that our newsletter can reflect all of the busy and vibrant activities of all of our groups.

In addition, in continuation of our work in early childhood development and developmental screening, Dr. Abraham Gallegos has a survey on management of developmental delays. You can complete [this survey](#) for a chance to win a \$100 Amazon gift card!

This month, national AAP has started an E-cigarette Chapter Champion program, and I am happy to let you know that I have agreed to be the champion for our chapter. Through our preventive medicine program at UCLA, we are in the process of negotiating a contract with California Department of Public Health to work on addressing the youth vaping epidemic and will hopefully start working on these efforts in October. An important component is the training of pediatricians to identify and treat youth who are addicted to vaping, so we will definitely be bringing more resources together with the support of national AAP to address this important issue. In the era of COVID, we need to double down on making sure that youth do not vape.

We are hopeful that our rescheduled Annual Symposium will be able to occur in August. However, we are starting to think about converting to a virtual platform depending on how things move forward this summer. We are also considering other virtual events to keep us connected as a chapter. Please stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

Finally, I wanted to remind everyone to vote in the chapter and national AAP elections. The ballot for the chapter will open from May 18 to May 31 and we will send a separate email containing more details. The ballot for national will be open from May 26 to June 9. The bios for the candidates for the positions of president-elect are available in the newsletter for your perusal.

Stay safe and healthy, and please take care of yourselves and each other.

Thanks for all that you do on behalf of children in our communities!

Alice Kuo, MD, PhD, MBA, FAAP  
Chapter President