

## **Transcript 1- An Important Message on COVID-19**

Dear members of the allergy/immunology community,

I am Mary Beth Fasano, the current President of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, and I'm also a practicing allergist/immunologist at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Since the spread of SARS-CoV-2 beyond Wuhan, China, we've all had to make very difficult decisions. The global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on our personal and our professional lives in unimaginable ways. I've heard from many of you about the challenges you're facing in your local communities, challenges with respect to keeping your offices open, continuing to provide care to your patients, assuring the safety and health of your staff, assuring access to supplies and medications. Challenges with transitioning from face-to-face visits to telehealth visits and phone triage, addressing financial concerns, and addressing concerns over ability to find consistent and reliable updated information regarding the pandemic.

Like many of you, I was disappointed that our Annual Meeting in Philadelphia was cancelled, but thankful that it was. Please know that the Academy is actively working to recreate that Annual Meeting in a new virtual format.

Like all of you, I draw energy from seeing patients and I'm sad, frustrated, angry that it is no longer business as usual. I'm concerned about the health and safety of my team, and I'm concerned and frustrated with the rapidly evolving barriers and restrictions that are limiting my ability to practice allergy/immunology in the way that I know best. Like all of you, I'm concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the health of our communities. I'm concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on some of the most vulnerable, which include our patients with asthma, chronic lung disease, and immune-based disorders. I'm worried about how this crisis may evolve. We're all removed from our friends, colleagues, mentors.

I want you to know that the Academy is actively engaged in working with our Advocacy Committee, Hart Health, Office of Practice Management, and in regular contact with your state, regional and local governors to assure that your voices are heard. We are continuing to work to develop up to date information related to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it impacts on your work as an allergist/immunologist. I encourage all of you to regularly go to the Academy website and access our special resource section on the COVID-19 pandemic.

I recommend that you frequently monitor the websites for your local and state health department as well as your state medical society, to learn about updates on the pandemic in your community, and also go to the websites for the CDC, and the World Health Organization to hear more about the national and global impact of COVID-19.

The Academy is committed to our mission of advancing the knowledge and practice of allergy, asthma, and immunology for optimal patient care. In the coming days, weeks, and months, we will continue to work to be innovators and to develop creative ways to provide you with resources to enable you to continue to help your patients and to continue to serve your communities.

I hope to be able to continue to touch base with you frequently, but, in the meantime, thank you for all you do. Be healthy, be flexible, stay safe, take care of yourself. Look after your friends and your family. Thank you.