

April Curriculum Reform Newsletter

April, 2020

How has CUSOM responded to COVID-19 Pandemic?

The faculty members, staff, and students of the School of Medicine have truly come together during this unprecedented time to provide support to all people throughout the organization and medical community. Our faculty members are working tirelessly to treat those impacted by the virus and other diseases throughout our Colorado Hospitals. Our students are taking up the call to volunteer where they can and additionally using this opportunity to learn through new methods. Our staff members and directors have found new ways to adapt curricular elements to virtual methods that allow for online learning, discussion, and participation. As everyone is impacted on a variety of levels, the School of Medicine continues to rapidly adapt to the changing climate and regulations.

How has student learning changed?

The CU School of Medicine is following the recommendations from the state and federal government as well as AAMC when making decisions about how to adapt and deliver content to our students. Currently, all students in Phase I are receiving their curriculum virtually through lectures and small group zoom sessions that are being coordinated by their coaches, facilitators, faculty, and staff. This effort was tested and implemented right away with the help of our Ed Tech team so that our students would not miss valuable content.

Phase II students are studying for USMLE Step 1 under extreme circumstances of uncertainty as all testing centers are currently closed. We are encouraging them to take breaks and continue their study plan at a slower pace with plans to ramp up again during the weeks leading up to the anticipated re-opening.

Our Phase III and IV students are working with their individual blocks, LICs, and away rotations to adjust their plans and schedules as well as enrolling in a brand new COVID 19 elective. Through the elective, students have the opportunity to learn more about the virus by doing research on the virus itself, through expert lecture series, by volunteering in approved community and healthcare settings, and by learning more about the impact of COVID-19 on our communities. As this new generation of doctors emerges, they will have experience conducting research, be knowledgeable on how these types of

situations can impact all levels of healthcare systems, understand the downstream societal impacts of a pandemic, and be prepared for other outbreaks in the future planning of healthcare initiatives.

What comes next?

As a teaching and learning medical community, we will remain dedicated to the health and safety of all of our School of Medicine entities and contributors. We will remain vigilant to all National Guidelines and Federal Regulations to ensure we are following all recommended safety protocols. The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical campus additionally posts regular updates to their [Coronavirus website](#) to provide the most recent information and resources available.

From a curriculum reform perspective, we are committed to learning from this experience of designing and implementing many forms of virtual curriculum through rapid CQI cycles. The lessons learned from this unprecedented disruption to our learning and teaching environment will inform our way forward in the new curriculum. We have learned that we can take risks, learn from our mistakes, work hard and incorporate feedback in real time. These are essential lessons for every change and we are committed to being curious leaders and learners throughout the days and months ahead.