

**From:** [Schwartz, David](#)  
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Dear Friends and Colleagues.

A week has gone by, the number of our Covid patients continue to decrease, we're looking more like a comprehensive medical center, and our society is beginning to open. The challenges we've faced in the past few months have brought out the best in us. We've learned that while we can't choose all of our challenges, we can and have controlled our response to the Covid Pandemic. And we should all feel empowered by our response; the outstanding care we've provided to our patients, the genuine comradery we've extended to each other, and our deep-seeded collective values of generosity, patience, and persistence. However, we've got many challenges ahead, and while we're all awaiting a second surge of cases, we're now faced with the challenges of reopening of our medical center (discussed in the last DOM Covid Communication), addressing our new fiscal reality, protecting our most vulnerable faculty, and finding creative solutions for our professional (and personal) isolation. In the following few paragraphs, I'm going to describe these challenges and discuss my thinking.

- **Fiscal Reality:** We anticipate a departmental loss in clinical revenue of \$4.3M in FY20 (ends June 30<sup>th</sup>) and \$2.9M in FY21 (starts July 1<sup>st</sup>). While we've figured out how to cover our losses in FY20, and have a plan in place for FY21 to address the anticipated loss of clinical revenue, the loss of clinical revenue in FY21 is just the beginning of our financial challenge. Covid has produced an unprecedented global financial crisis that will affect our department in several ways. First, the state of Colorado is estimated to lose \$3.3B this year, and consequently will decrease our SOM state appropriation by 16.9% and eliminate capital funding for RC3 (\$22M). While state appropriations will be mitigated somewhat by the CARES Act, the DOM will receive less state funds from the SOM in FY21. Second, given what we've heard from UCHealth, our hospital partner will be under substantial financial stress in FY21 due to a considerable number of Covid patients requiring lots of nursing and respiratory care, a decrease in patient volumes (ED, trauma, transplant, rehab, and clinic), a change in payer mix, and an anticipated second surge. We've been told to anticipate a decrease in the support from the hospital in FY21 and we will be receiving more details soon. Third, as a result of increasing unemployment, our payer mix will change. As the % of Medicaid patients increase, DOM collections will decrease. Additionally, the more Medicaid expands, the more likely Medicaid will decrease the rate they are reimbursing to providers. So how are we going to deal with this? We're going to approach this thoughtfully, strategically, and collaboratively. We need to figure out how to maximize our revenue, strategically use our reserves, reduce our expenses, minimize our new hires, and consider every option. However, in addressing these financial challenges, we will continue to prioritize support for our faculty, trainees, and staff, and the educational and research programs that we've built over the past decade. This won't be easy.

There will be trade-offs but we'll make them together.

- **Vulnerable Faculty:** Historically, our most vulnerable faculty have been our early career faculty. As a consequence of Covid-19, these faculty and especially early career faculty with young families are at especially high risk. In addition to new responsibilities at work, early career faculty often face new expectations at home – childcare, home schooling, disrupted plans for the summer, and potentially additional financial pressure. It's important that we step in institutionally to provide a safety net. The University has approved an automatic one-year promotion extension for Assistant Professors. **All DOM Assistant Professors must notify Katie Rodriguez ([katie.rodriguez@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:katie.rodriguez@cuanschutz.edu)) of your intention no later than August 31, 2020 whether or not you wish to postpone your promotion.** In addition, Marisha Burden is leading a committee to better define the needs and options for our vulnerable faculty. You should expect a needs assessment survey this week. Please fill out the survey so we have a comprehensive understanding of the problem and can begin to consider our options.
- **Professional (and Personal) Isolation:** Zoom meetings have been extremely helpful but they've left all of us a bit unsatisfied. I think that's why we're all talking with each other more. But talking is different than being in the same room. For me, the up side of social isolation is more time to get things done and think, the down side is social and professional isolation. I'm sure that each of us have our own way of addressing this isolation. But it's important now, more than before, to make an effort to reach out and stay connected. During the past several months, on a daily basis I've consciously reached out beyond my inner circle to distant colleagues and friends. I haven't yet attended a Zoom scientific meeting but am looking forward to the experience. Don't underestimate the importance of reaching out to others both personally and professionally or the support that's available for you if you run into problems. We had a recent Medicine Grand Rounds that focused on keeping the mind healthy during Covid-19 (<https://youtu.be/2ymRbA7ikeM>), and there's a lot of resources on campus for you if you need it (<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/psychiatry/covid-19-support>).

**Covid-19 Medical Grand Rounds (MGRs):** The presentations for our MGRs have been spectacular, are posted on the [Grand Rounds library](#), and recording are available at the below youtube sites. We have three upcoming Covid-19 MGRs that are scheduled below – please join us for these presentations and discussions.

- **April 1: Covid-19: Challenges, Opportunities, and Unknowns** <https://youtu.be/fVL7xv29Bf0?t=1>
- **April 8: Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, Interleukin-6, and Cytokine Storm Induced By Covid-19** <https://youtu.be/iUmsUqFUItA?t=1>
- **April 15: Crisis Standards of Care: 10 Years of Lessons Learned About Ethical Triage, But Are We Ready?** <https://youtu.be/5P-BPasEL3k>

- **April 22<sup>nd</sup>: SARS-CoV2 Vaccine Development** <https://youtu.be/kD90qLY1c-s?t=1>
- **April 29<sup>th</sup>: Challenges in the management of Covid-19 patients, case-based presentations** <https://youtu.be/6y1kCWNf7g8>
- **May 6<sup>th</sup>: Covid-19: Why the supply chain for PPE and medications are vulnerable to disasters** [https://youtu.be/hXsdQi15o\\_g](https://youtu.be/hXsdQi15o_g)
- **May 13<sup>th</sup>: Mind the Brain: Mental health in the time of Covid-19** <https://youtu.be/2ymRbA7ikeM>
- **May 27<sup>th</sup>: Racial differences and health disparities in Covid-19**
  - Shanta Zimmer, MD
  - Lily Cervantes, MD
  - Carlos Franco-Paredes MD
  - Katherine Dickinson, PhD
- **June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Neurologic and cognitive sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection**
  - David Beckham, MD
  - Ken Tyler, MD
  - Sarah Jolley, MD
- **June 10<sup>th</sup>: Endothelial injury and thrombosis in Covid-19**

Covid-19 has proven itself to be a marathon. Pace yourself mentally, we have many more miles to go. To meet the challenge of this marathon, we need to stay focused and we need stay together. So stay well and stay connected. Take some time for yourself on this Memorial Day. My very best wishes to you, your family, and your friends.

David

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