



APPNA
Greater St. Louis Chapter
Association of Physicians of Pakistani descent
of North America



7/29/21

Executive Committee
2021

President 2021
Tariq Jawaid Alam, M.D., FAAN

President-Elect | 2021
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Ahmed Ali, M.D.

Councilors
Ayaz Ahmad, M.D.
Farrukh Shamim, M.D.

APPNA Greater St Louis Chapter Statement on Support of Public Health Leaders and Initiatives during COVID Pandemic

Dear Council Chairwoman Days,

The Greater St Louis chapter of the Association of Physicians of Pakistani descent of North America represents nearly 300 physicians from the Greater St Louis area. Our member physicians serve and provide outstanding medical care at every St Louis area hospital in all medical specialties. Our member physicians also lead hospital systems as chief medical officers and medical directors that directly affect patient care and health policy in the St Louis region.

Almost all our member physicians are immigrants who call St Louis home. We have served our patients and those who seek medical care with utmost compassion, excellence and state of the art medical and scientific innovation and knowledge. We do not discriminate patients or those who come to us for help in times of great need on basis of their skin color, religion, sexual orientation or economic status.

We also recognize that racism, bullying and threatening behavior are public health issues that directly leads to increased violence in society. As members of a community, it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that these public health concerns are addressed and safeguarded to ensure everyone's safety and well being.

Our member physicians have first hand knowledge of the dire consequences of Covid infection in our area hospitals. Our physicians have worked overtime in an unprecedented environment just to care for our area residents. We had, and continue to put our own lives at risk taking care of patients even when there were no vaccines available.

As such, we rely heavily on the directions and the guidance of our public health officials to use the best public health discourse and scientific knowledge with the sole objective to save lives of our fellow St Louisans.

Greater St. Louis Chapter of APPNA
Saint Louis, MO

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Patients often leave their most critical health decisions on the good and sound judgement of their physicians. Physicians are in turn guided by the notion of “do no harm” as we make decisions about life and death.

It is therefore very disheartening for the medical community to see the abuse and vilification of the St Louis County Acting Health Director Dr Faisal Khan at the county council meeting on Tuesday 27th July 2021.

Dr Khan as a public health leader was advocating for the safety and wellbeing of the very same constituents who heckled, abused and physically molested him. It is very unfortunate that his medical education was brought to question because of his accent and skin color. May I take this opportunity to remind you that one in four physician in the United States is an immigrant, without whom the entire healthcare infrastructure in the US will be gravely disrupted. As a consequence, citizens will not have timely access to doctors to take care of them when they are most vulnerable. You will find immigrant physicians, including, black and brown physicians in every area hospital in the St Louis region because of whom the healthcare system runs seamlessly and constituents have access to excellent medical care.

As physician leaders, we ask you, our elected leaders, to trust science and the experts in matters of healthcare, just as we trust other professionals in their areas of expertise. We ask you, that the council ensures the safety and respect of public health professionals who are advocating for good health and longevity. We ask you to ensure that racism, bullying, violent and threatening behavior is condemned at every level of our governance and government so that we can build a healthy and prosperous society, conducive for the progress, safety and well being of all.

Looking forward to your leadership,

Tariq J. Alam, MD, FAAN
 President
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