



## Students Assist America Salutes White House Recognition of Student Vaccinators

*Health professions students to help speed COVID-19 vaccine delivery across U.S.*

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Bethesda, MD) – Hailing it as a critical step forward in the nation’s COVID-19 vaccination strategy, [Students Assist America](#) (SAA) today thanked the Biden Administration for adopting its proposal to amend the *Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act COVID-19 Declaration*. The change opens the door for almost one million skilled medical, nursing, pharmacy, dental, veterinary, PA, optometry and other health professions students to administer COVID-19 vaccines with supervision.

SAA members have advocated for months for the deployment of qualified students to alleviate the burdens on an overwhelmed healthcare workforce. Members of SAA reiterated the immense value of engaging health professions students just last week on a call with key staff from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Even before COVID-19 vaccines were authorized for use, SAA worked with states and the federal government to raise awareness of the untapped potential of student vaccinators and encouraged leaders to include students in their vaccination strategies. After discussions with SAA, several states adopted measures to allow student participation, but a consistent, national model was still lacking. To drive awareness at the federal level, SAA provided comments to both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Vaccine Advisory Committee, sent a broad letter of recommendations to the [Biden-Harris COVID- 19 Task Force](#), and finally, sent a [letter specifically](#) recommending this approach to HHS in January.

“President Biden said it exactly right – we are at war with this virus,” said Robert A Cain, DO, President and CEO of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). “And the fastest way to win a war is with all hands contributing what they can. The skills and commitment these students bring offers much-needed help. It was time to let them join the fight.”

## **About SAA**

[Students Assist America \(SAA\)](#) is an interprofessional initiative of 12 associations spearheaded by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. Through SAA, future physicians, physician assistants, nurses, social workers, veterinarians, dentists and dental hygienists, public health experts, optometrists, pharmacists, psychologists and allied health professionals have joined together as an interdisciplinary safety net to ensure that the weight of the COVID-19 emergency does not crush the U.S. healthcare system and put Americans at further risk.

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