Disclosure of COVID-19 Vaccination Status by Physicians

Policy document

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Physician practice, compensation, forms

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In consideration of the public health emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic, any measure that reduces access to health care and compromises patient care, or that exposes health care providers to unnecessary risks, is not consistent with the goals of the pandemic response. Consequently, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) encourages all physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to patients, if they are comfortable and able to do so.

Section 1: Introduction

The CMA recognizes that the disclosure of COVID-19 vaccination status by physicians is a matter of personal choice and that the decision to disclose is influenced by a number of factors, including the following:

- Personal Choice: Every physician has the right to choose whether to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status.
- Professional Integrity: Physicians have a responsibility to ensure that their actions do not undermine public trust in the medical profession.
- Legal and Regulatory Requirements: Disclosure of COVID-19 vaccination status is not mandated by any legal or regulatory requirements.
- Ethical Considerations: The ethical implications of disclosing COVID-19 vaccination status vary depending on the context and the potential consequences of such disclosure.

Section 2: Recommendations

1. The CMA encourages physicians to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to patients to the extent that it does not compromise patient care, does not harm patient trust, or does not create unnecessary risks to personal safety.
2. Physicians should be aware that disclosure of COVID-19 vaccination status may not be appropriate in all situations, such as where it may be interpreted as discriminatory or stigmatizing.
3. Physicians should be mindful of the potential for disclosure to be used for political or other purposes that are not in the best interests of patients or the profession.
4. Physicians should consider the potential for disclosure to be used in ways that may harm the public or the profession.

Section 3: Conclusion

The CMA recognizes that the disclosure of COVID-19 vaccination status is a matter of personal choice and that the decision to disclose is influenced by a number of factors, including the following:

- Personal Choice: Every physician has the right to choose whether to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status.
- Professional Integrity: Physicians have a responsibility to ensure that their actions do not undermine public trust in the medical profession.
- Legal and Regulatory Requirements: Disclosure of COVID-19 vaccination status is not mandated by any legal or regulatory requirements.
- Ethical Considerations: The ethical implications of disclosing COVID-19 vaccination status vary depending on the context and the potential consequences of such disclosure.

The CMA recommends that physicians consider the potential for disclosure to be used in ways that may harm the public or the profession.

Appendix A: Case Studies

1. In a small rural community, a physician chose not to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status because they believed it could cause a public backlash.
2. In a large urban center, a physician chose to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status because they believed it could help to reduce patient anxiety and promote trust in the medical profession.

Appendix B: Resources

- Canadian Medical Association: https://policybase.cma.ca
- Canadian Red Cross: https://www.redcross.org
- World Health Organization: https://www.who.int

The CMA encourages physicians to consult with their professional organizations and local health authorities to determine the best course of action in their specific context.

References


The CMA recommends that physicians consult with their professional organizations and local health authorities to determine the best course of action in their specific context.