

### Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/covid-19-frontlines/enlisting-students-fight-against-covid-19-helpful-or-harmful/11325/>

### ReachMD

www.reachmd.com  
info@reachmd.com  
(866) 423-7849

---

### Enlisting Students in the Fight Against COVID-19: Helpful or Harmful?

Dr. Birnholz:

Coming to you from the ReachMD Studios, this is *COVID-19: On the Frontlines*. I'm Dr. Matt Birnholz.

As ICUs prepare for and respond to influxes of critical care patients suffering severe manifestations of COVID-19, hospital administrations are diverting staffing and equipment resources away from non-critical operations such as outpatient services and elective procedures. Some medical schools and local authorities are also considering measures to enlist students and other trainees more directly in the fight against this pandemic, which is generating controversies over the potential risks and costs.

COVID-19 has already irreversibly shaped the next generation of physicians, causing cancellations of Match Day events, Board exams, and clinical rotations. Now an increasing number of government entities are calling on medical students to join front-line efforts to combat the virus.

In Colorado, medical students are manning hospital hotlines, screening visitors, and assisting staff with managing scarce equipment. In New York, medical schools have been asked to survey their students' readiness to assist with patient care. And in Kentucky, proposals have been made for medical schools to recruit students to conduct testing of patients suspected of having COVID-19.

Across the world, countries have been strategizing how best to increase the number of doctors available. Italy and the United Kingdom have expedited licensing and registration for new medical school graduates. In Latin America, the Brazilian minister of education drafted a proposal that would enlist all medical students in patient care.

But in the United States, where medical students' educations are primarily subsidized by loans rather than grants, some students balk at being thrust into volunteer service.

In one online discussion, a student wrote the following, quote: "As an MS4 with \$250K in debt, I feel like hospitals should be paying medical students who are called on during the corona virus," endquote.

Another student put it more bluntly, quote: "Student loan relief, or hazard pay. Otherwise, not a chance."

For ReachMD, this is *COVID-19: On the Frontlines*. For continuing access to this and other episodes, and to add *your* perspectives on the fight against this global pandemic, visit us at ReachMD.com and become Part of the Knowledge. Thank you for listening.