



American Academy of
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FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST LONG COVID

As the nation continues to face the lingering impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, it is paramount that the federal response recognizes and addresses the crisis of Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2, also known as “PASC” or “Long COVID.”

According to two recent publications from the Journal of the American Medical Association, 10-30% of individuals who had COVID-19 reported at least one persistent symptom up to six months after the virus left their bodies, regardless of whether they exhibited COVID-19 symptoms during their initial infection. Due to the high infection rate in the United States, anywhere between 8 to nearly 24 million Americans are likely to experience these often-debilitating symptoms long-term. The symptoms for those experiencing Long COVID are varied and ongoing, and can include neurological challenges, cognitive problems such as brain fog, shortness of breath, fatigue, pain, and mobility issues.

Physiatrists have been on the frontlines of treating Long COVID, and are indispensable leaders in directing rehabilitation and recovery for patients dealing with this condition. The specialty’s medical expertise in assessing and treating patients with Long COVID means that physiatrists are uniquely qualified to assist with the efforts to fight this condition.

To address this debilitating condition, Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), and Ed Markey (D-MA), and Representatives Don Beyer (D-VA-8) and Jack Bergman (R-MI-1), have introduced bicameral legislation, S. 801 / H.R. 1616, the *Comprehensive Access to Resources and Education (CARE) for Long COVID Act*, to provide resources for people living with Long COVID and improve research into this condition.

The *CARE for Long COVID Act* would, among other things:

- **Accelerate Long COVID research** by authorizing the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to centralize and synthesize robust datasets regarding patient experiences with Long COVID and related conditions for future research;
- **Improve understanding of Long COVID treatment efficacy and disparities** by authorizing HHS to study the healthcare system’s response to Long COVID and provide recommendations for how to improve that response;
- **Educate Long COVID patients and medical providers** through the CDC to develop and disseminate information on common symptoms and treatment for Long COVID and related conditions; and
- **Facilitate interagency coordination to educate the public**, including employers and schools, on the impact of Long COVID and rights associated with employment, disability status and education for individuals with Long COVID.

[AAPM&R urges members of Congress to cosponsor S. 801 / H.R. 1616, the *Comprehensive Access to Resources and Education \(CARE\) for Long COVID Act*.](#)

Please contact Samantha Koehler (Samantha_Koehler@kaine.senate.gov) with Sen. Kaine or Kate Schisler (Kate.Schisler@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Beyer to cosponsor this important legislation.

Contact Chris Stewart, Director of Advocacy and Government Affairs, at cstewart@aapmr.org.