



# PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

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## **Family physicians can help patients address COVID-related mental health concerns**

*(HARRISBURG, Pa. May 12, 2021)* It goes without saying that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on every aspect of our lives. Facing the myriad of challenges associated with the pandemic has been stressful, overwhelming, and emotional for many.

The public health measures, such as social distancing, that have been implemented over the past year, have been necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but they can make us feel isolated and lonely, increasing stress and anxiety. Grieving for the thousands of Pennsylvanians who have lost their lives to COVID-19 has only added to the strain.

As people continue to get vaccinated and states begin to ease restrictions, it is expected that many people will experience a degree of hesitation, anxiety, or even depression as the restrictions are lifted and things slowly begin to return to some form of normal.

PAFP President Tiffany Leonard, MD, offers this advice: “If you find yourself struggling to adjust, please do not hesitate to reach out to your family physician for help and guidance. Family physicians are trained to handle most basic mental health concerns and can help you find the necessary resources if your needs exceed their abilities.”

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*The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians and its Foundation is a physician-led organization committed to advancing quality health care through advocacy, education, workforce development and commitment to the patients we serve. For over 70 years and with more than 5,500 physician, resident and student members, the Academy and its Foundation’s core values are visionary leadership, integrity and community.*