

Statement on Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)-Takers during COVID-19

Given the severity of the pandemic, maintaining adequate social distancing is crucial to ensuring the safety of all individuals in testing centers. MCAT test takers have come forward to voice their concerns on the inadequate social distancing in MCAT testing centers. Test-takers also report not being asked about their symptoms or exposure to the novel coronavirus. Prospective medical students go through extensive pre-medical courses and preparation to perform well on the MCAT. All the years of countless hours of studying and preparation, and sacrifice comes down to one exam encapsulating their hard work and efforts to pursue admission to medical school. Students should not have to worry about their safety when their primary focus should be performing well on the exam.

In order to ensure the safety of test-takers, the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) strongly recommends that testing centers enforce proper safety protocols. Implementing mandatory temperature checks, assessing for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure to the novel coronavirus before entering the testing site, appropriate physical-distancing throughout the exam process, and provision and appropriate disposal of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are essential to maintaining optimal safety for test-takers.

To decrease the risk of spread of the novel coronavirus we must enforce the above-mentioned safety protocols for every person entering the testing center, regardless of the test to be administered. Having multiple exams for other programs occurring at the same time, in the same testing center, increases the likelihood of contracting the virus. Safety protocols, including physical distancing, must be stringently enforced for everyone. to decrease this risk and to ensure the safety of test-takers.

As we move forward with in-person testing, there should be stringent and evidence-based preventative measures and precautions set in place. AMWA calls for urgent implementation of safety measures while continuing to advocate for equity in the healthcare field. Enforcing a safe and socially distanced environment will decrease the risk of infection for the testers, and also shift the focus back to the exam.

AMWA Advocacy Committee

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