

To champion the prevention,  
diagnosis, and treatment of chest  
diseases through education,  
communication, and research.

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April 19, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services  
Education Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services  
Education Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST) writes to bring to your attention the issue of Post-Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS) and the timely need for additional funding dedicated to the treatment of this condition. PICS characterizes the condition of lasting physical, cognitive, or mental impairment following the survival of critical illness or intensive care.<sup>1</sup> As the nation focuses its attention on a swift recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, mitigating long-term health effects in this most vulnerable patient population should be the priority. We urge you to include additional funding for PICS research and treatment in the FY 2024 Appropriations bill, and we submit this request in alignment with and in support of the American Medical Association.

CHEST is the leading professional association in innovative chest medicine. We advance the best health outcomes for patients with lung disease through education, advocacy, research, and philanthropy. CHEST is the professional home for more than 21,000 pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine professionals dedicated to the delivery of quality, evidence-based care for patients. Our mission is to champion the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of chest diseases with a focus on ensuring and improving access for all patients, particularly underserved patients of highest need. As such, CHEST supports additional resource allocation for PICS.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant increase in patients who have survived admission into an intensive care unit (ICU), and this can lead to long-term sequelae for patients, particularly among the patients we

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<sup>1</sup> American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST). Post-Intensive Care Syndrome. 2021. [Infographic]. Accessed from: [https://www.chestnet.org/-/media/chesnetorg/Topic-Collections/Documents/COVID-19/PICS\\_Infographic.ashx?\\_ga=2.36190944.1136186125.1636987514-1316320828.1636987514](https://www.chestnet.org/-/media/chesnetorg/Topic-Collections/Documents/COVID-19/PICS_Infographic.ashx?_ga=2.36190944.1136186125.1636987514-1316320828.1636987514)

<sup>1</sup> Biehl M, Sese D. Post-intensive care syndrome and COVID-19-Implications post pandemic. Cleveland Clinic journal of medicine. 2020 Aug 5.

serve.<sup>2</sup> PICS is a condition that may have a profound impact on patients' quality of life, and when unrecognized, patients are often at risk of subsequent hospitalization and emergency department and outpatient visits, which lead to an increase in health care costs.<sup>3</sup> In order to address these costs, screening and prevention measures as well as recovery measures, require additional resource allocation. Calls to action for greater attention to PICS are not only supported by national associations, but also by the international health care community at large.<sup>4,5</sup>

As the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) plans for the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) to expire in May 2023, we urge Congress to include additional funding for PICS research and treatment in the FY 2024 Appropriations Bill to ensure the swift recovery for the patients hit the hardest by the pandemic effects. We appreciate your consideration, and for additional follow up correspondence, please contact Nicki Augustyn, at [naugustyn@chest.org](mailto:naugustyn@chest.org).

Sincerely,



Doreen J. Addrizzo-Harris, MD, FCCP  
President



Robert A. Musacchio  
Chief Executive Officer and EVP

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<sup>3</sup> Jaffri A, Jaffri UA. Post-Intensive care syndrome and COVID-19: crisis after a crisis?. *Heart & Lung: The Journal of Cardiopulmonary and Acute Care*. 2020 Nov 1;49(6):883-4.

<sup>4</sup> Stam HJ, Stucki G, Bickenbach J. Covid-19 and post intensive care syndrome: a call for action. *Journal of rehabilitation medicine*. 2020 Apr 15;52(4):1-4.

<sup>5</sup> Lee M, Kang J, Jeong YJ. Risk factors for post-intensive care syndrome: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Australian Critical Care*. 2020 May 1;33(3):287-94.