Greetings and Welcome to April 2020! The world has changed drastically since my March CEO message; COVID-19 has affected everyone around the globe by changing the way we work and interact. But the American Foreign Service Protective Association (AFSPA) wants to support you during these unique and challenging times.

01 | FSBP COVID-19 Updates

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a contagious respiratory illness that has flu-like symptoms. Confirmed coronavirus cases have reported mild to severe symptoms and in some cases, even death. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic – a global disease outbreak.

The Foreign Service Benefit Plan (FSBP) has made provisions, for a limited time, to address this crisis. This includes 100% coverage for CDC-approved COVID-19 testing and treatment, removing early refill prescription restrictions, and expanding telehealth/telemedicine services – domestically and overseas.

Your safety and security remain our top priority. We are simplifying your care, to protect the lives of you and your families.
The COVID-19 pandemic has created unexpected fears and new anxieties such as – How long will this last? When will we be safe? Are my loved ones okay?

In addition, most countries are attempting to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by requiring some degree of collective separation or “social distancing.” This keeps people from interacting closely or frequently, reducing the risk of spreading the virus. As a result, most schools, jobs, movie theaters, sporting events, and religious services have temporarily discontinued operations.

Anxiety about all of this may make it difficult to sleep or concentrate. Concerns for getting proper care, matters related to finances, and frustrations with the overall circumstances can overtake your mind. You also may experience mental stress from social distancing, adjusting to full-time telework, managing changed family dynamics, or just plain boredom.

Manage your Mental Wellness. Be proactive and intentional in connecting with others. Depression, loneliness, or stress may cause your physical health to decline or chronic conditions to worsen. Take steps to stay well.

Even in this unique crisis, you can manage your mental and emotional health. Here are resources to help:

**General Mental Wellness Resources:**

- FSBP Mental Wellness Programs
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Kids Health resources for parents, teens and kids

**Topic Specific Resources:**

- Teleworking Successfully
- Social Distancing Activity Ideas
- A Social Distancing Cluttering/Cleaning Plan
03 | Dental Care During COVID-19

Dental offices in the Dominion and Cigna networks are limiting stateside appointments to those with emergency needs (severe pain, acute infection, swelling, and/or persistent bleeding). This reduction-in-service follows recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Dental Association. Cigna International also follows any guidance given by the World Health Organization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, please delay any planned, non-urgent dental care. If you have questions, contact us at 202-833-4910. See the full guidelines and support measures taken by Dominion and Cigna.

Learn more about Dental Infection Control Procedures >

04 | Final Thoughts

Washington DC area COVID-19 restrictions have increased. The entire region now is under a government mandated “stay-at-home” order. As a result, AFSPA offices remain closed and our staff is handling daily operations remotely. To comply with the order and for the safety of our staff, AFSPA’s physical mail will be collected less frequently – meaning paper claims processing may be delayed. We recommend filing claims electronically for more immediate service. When possible, use your AFSPA Member Portal, Aetna secure member website, and Express Scripts site. While we anticipate minimal disruptions, we thank you in advance for your patience and flexibility.

We hope you and your families stay safe. Take comfort in knowing that AFSPA is monitoring the worldwide COVID-19 situation to properly support you. Thank you for your continued trust and ongoing loyalty.
To Your Health,

Paula S. Jakub, RHU
CEO, AFSPA
Executive Director, Senior Living Foundation

Please watch AFSPA's 2020 Annual Member Meeting video, recorded live on March 6th. We also recently mailed the 2020 Senior Living Foundation (SLF) Newsletter to our Foreign Service colleagues. Learn how the SLF charity supports retired Foreign Service personnel and their spouses.