



With reference to the differences in opinion on the Unified Guidelines for Return to Work Clearance proposed by the PMA, PCOM, PSMID, PCP, PAFP, PSGIM and PSPHP - these guidelines are designed for specific audiences to assist decision making in workplace contexts. We understand and fully laud the plan of business and industry leaders to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their workers just as we, as Physicians, are bound to our Hippocratic Oath to keep the health and well-being of our patients as our foremost concern.

As frontliners dedicated to the service of humanity who have battled COVID-19 since Day 1, colleagues have paid with their lives to care for patients, further exacting heavy tolls on our already strained health system. All the more this drives us to assist governments and enterprises to make wise, evidence-informed decisions. We your Medical frontliners, share with you the following points for consideration:

1. We understand that the endorsement of rapid antibody tests (RATs) has been deemed as one way by which companies can somehow ensure their workers' safety in the workplace. With this in mind, we proceeded to do our best to review best evidence and experiences currently available to us. Available data shows that various RATs have high false positive rates and may bestow a false sense of security when results are negative resulting in unintended harm.

2. In our different areas of expertise, we do our best to collaborate on better solutions. In that spirit of solidarity we reiterate our medical advice that to clear people for work, the "14-day test" is best. This means that employees should have no COVID-19 symptoms for at least 14 days - from the time of exposure for contacts, and from the time of relief of symptoms for suspect, probable and confirmed cases. This clinical test is more accurate than the RAT, can be feasibly done by occupational health physicians or nurses on asymptomatic individuals, and incurs no additional costs for laboratory procedures.

3. For companies and decision makers who have to make plans for their workers, we urge them to seek the help of our colleagues to discuss the above particulars and considerations.

We wish to reassure all of our patients that we are doing our very best to keep you and your families and communities safe and healthy. As we all face the uncertainties of this pandemic, we need to help our workforce dispel misperceptions and allay their fears, using the correct, most cost-effective tools. Again, we do not recommend the use of rapid antibody tests as basis for return to work when used in asymptomatic persons. We recommend the 14 day clinical test for screening as our "best buy".

Ultimately, good workplace practice, mutual respect and trust will matter more than the results of rapid antibody tests. We do our best to work together with our colleagues in different fields to synthesize the best advice. This is a time for science and solidarity. Let us all move forward in a unified front against our formidable enemy, COVID 19.