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Statement Regarding Dissemination of COVID-19 Misinformation

September 27, 2021

The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG) fully supports the statement published by the [Federation of State Medical Boards \(FSMB\)](#) that asserts that providing misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine contradicts physicians' ethical and professional responsibilities, and therefore may subject a physician to disciplinary actions, including suspension or revocation of their medical license. Additionally, ABOG supports a recent [American Board of Medical Specialties \(ABMS\) statement](#), which expresses concern regarding the serious public health effects of the persistent spread of misinformation regarding the COVID-19 virus.

Patients rely on physicians to practice evidence-based medicine based on facts and scientific data. The FSMB and ABMS statements align with the ABOG standards and policies for certification and maintenance of certification that involve medical professionalism and professional standing. These standards include:

- acting in your patients' best interests
- behaving professionally with patients, families, and colleagues across health professions
- taking appropriate care of yourself
- representing your Board certification and MOC status in a professional manner

Providing intentional misinformation that may harm patients or public health does not meet these standards and may be grounds for adverse action on OB GYN certification status. In addition, ABOG is alerted if an OB GYN is investigated for practice or professionalism violations by a state medical board. ABOG acts based on its certification policies as described in the current MOC Bulletins and the [Revocation of Diploma or Certificate Policy](#).

A [recent article](#) highlights the risks posed to pregnant people by COVID-19 and the reports of increasing numbers of unvaccinated pregnant individuals in ICUs in several states with severe infection. The [CDC has reported](#) that the deaths in August are the highest number of deaths reported in any month since the start of the pandemic, citing that about 97% of pregnant people treated in the hospital for COVID-19 have been unvaccinated. The [ACOG, SMFM](#), and [CDC recommend the COVID-19 vaccine](#) for all people over the age of 12, including pregnant people. ABOG supports these recommendations and has incorporated this information in our Maintenance of Certification (MOC) learning and self-assessment offerings to help diplomates provide evidence-based care to the people and families that we serve.

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