



409 12th Street, SW
Suite 601
Washington, DC 20024
SMFM.org

OFFICERS

President 2020-2021
Judette Louis, MD, MPH
Tampa, FL

President-Elect 2020-2021
William Grobman, MD, MBA
Chicago, IL

Secretary-Treasurer 2020-2021
Joanne Stone, MD, MS
New York, NY

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer 2020-2021
Anthony Sciscione, DO
Wilmington, DE

Immediate Past President 2020-2021
Brian Iriye, MD
Las Vegas, NV

SMFM CEO

Matt Granato, LL.M, MBA
Washington, DC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joseph Biggio, Jr., MD 2021
New Orleans, LA

Eva Pressman, MD 2021
Rochester, NY

Christopher Robinson, MD, MSCE 2021
Charleston, SC

Sindhu Srinivas, MD, MSCE 2021
Philadelphia, PA

John Allbert, MD 2022
Charlotte, NC

Christian Pettker, MD 2022
New Haven, CT

Erika Werner, MD 2022
Providence, RI

Blair Wylie, MD 2022
Boston, MA

Brian Brost, MD
Winston-Salem, NC

Allison Bryant Mantha, MD, MPH 2023
Lexington, MA

Helen Feltovich, MD 2023
Provo, UT

Vanita Jain, MD 2023
Newark, DE

EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES

Brian Mercer, MD
Cleveland, OH

John Wachtel, MD
Palo Alto, CA

Thomas Lee, MD
Portland, OR

Whitney Booker, MD
New York, NY

Shannon Son, MD
Salt Lake City

Nahida Chakhtoura, MD
Bethesda, MD

George Wendel, MD
Dallas, TX

April 13, 2020

The Hon. Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

On behalf of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), we are writing to urge that you ensure the inclusion of underrepresented minorities and pregnant women in any clinical research related to COVID-19 vaccine or treatment development. It is critical at this juncture to ensure that the population of the United States is reflected appropriately in all activities so that we appropriately and adequately address this public health emergency.

Established in 1977, SMFM is the medical professional society for obstetricians who have additional training in the area of high-risk pregnancies. Our members see the sickest patients with the most complicated pregnancies. SMFM supports the clinical practice of maternal-fetal medicine by providing education, promoting research, and engaging in advocacy to optimize the health of high-risk pregnant women and their babies.

Our members are on the front lines of the COVID epidemic and are first-hand witnesses to the health inequities in our country. Not only are African-American women three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related complications than white women in the U.S., but early data from COVID throughout the country also indicates that the black community is particularly hard hit. The CDC must collect data stratified by race and ethnicity so that researchers and health care clinicians can understand the risk and ensure appropriate treatment. Beyond this, active collection of this data as well as data surrounding pregnant women with COVID will help to deploy resources to those communities that need it the most.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue and stand ready to assist in any way possible as we work with our pregnant patients to ensure optimal health outcomes. Should you have any questions, please contact Kerri Wade at kwade@smfm.org. We stand ready to assist you.

Sincerely,

Judette Louis, MD, MPH
President

Matt J. Granato, LL.M., MBA
Chief Executive Officer