



Physicians Urge Action for Gun Violence Prevention

Gun violence is an American epidemic that can no longer be ignored.

Even before the Newtown tragedy, the numbers alone reveal a grim story. According to a 2012 report from the Children's Defense Fund, the number of 5,740 preschoolers killed by guns in 2008 and in 2009 would have filled 229 public school classrooms of 25 students each.

Given the fact that millions of questionably secured weapons circulate through our communities, the National Physicians Alliance (NPA) believes that gun violence must be a part of any conversation about America's health. In addition to providing vigilant mental health screening and referral, concerned physicians should always be able to ask patients about gun ownership and safety.

The problem of gun violence in our nation is complex and solutions will involve more than gun regulation; these facts should not preclude action on some of the most obvious measures to reduce the number of preventable deaths by enacting stronger public safety laws.

The National Physicians Alliance urgently calls on lawmakers to:

- **Require background checks on all firearms and ammunition purchases**
- **Enact a comprehensive federal ban on military-style assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines**
- **Make gun trafficking and "straw" purchases a federal crime with serious penalties**
- **Work toward an evidence-based approach to gun violence prevention**

With deep condolences to the people of Newtown, Connecticut, and to all victims of gun violence, the NPA urges lawmakers to swiftly ban America's most lethal weapons and ammunition from the marketplace, and to substantively review and improve all laws that impact the legal sale and purchase of guns.

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United across medical specialties, the National Physicians Alliance was founded in 2005 to restore physicians' primary emphasis on the core values of the profession: service, integrity, and advocacy. The NPA works to improve health and well-being, and to ensure equitable, affordable, high quality health care for all people. The NPA strictly refuses financial entanglements with the pharmaceutical and biomedical industries.

To learn more, visit www.npalliance.org