

Position Statement on Firearms Access: Inquiries in Clinical Settings

Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 2023

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Issue:

In the United States, deaths and injuries related to firearms are a major public health problem. Since 2011, there has been proposed legislation in various states that would restrict physicians from making inquiries of patients and others (e.g., family members) in patient care contexts related to the possession of and access to firearms.

APA Position:

The American Psychiatric Association opposes legislation that restricts healthcare professionals from asking patients and others about firearms access and safety because such laws impede physicians from conducting appropriate evaluations and recommending interventions that are an accepted and critical part of psychiatric care.

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