



AAEM Releases Statement with SAEM on the Death of George Floyd

In the wake of the latest police killing of an African American man in Minneapolis, the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) and Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM) joins those calling for reforms on the use of deadly force by law enforcement, the review of discriminatory practices, and justice for those whose lives have been taken as a result of racism targeting people of color.

This past Monday George Floyd died while handcuffed, with a police officer's knee upon his neck, gasping for breath. His final words: "I can't breathe."

As emergency physicians, when a human being says, "I can't breathe," our immediate response is a call to action to save a life. We have committed our lives to reducing disparities in the emergency department and to providing compassionate, unconditional care for all who need it, regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, or any other human factor.

Unfortunately, as emergency physicians, we also know all too well that racism is a public health crisis and a national plague. We, all too often, see its devastating effects, most recently in the disproportionate COVID-19 deaths of people of color due in part to the long-standing health inequities that continue to exist.

George Floyd's death follows other recent killings of African Americans, including emergency medical technician Breonna Taylor in her home by Louisville police, and Ahmaud Arbery, murdered while jogging.

In the loudest and strongest possible terms, we condemn these needless killings. Systemic racism and oppression targeting people of color must be addressed. The time is now; it is long overdue.

AAEM and SAEM pledges, with a renewed sense of purpose, to champion equitable care for everyone in America, to train up just and compassionate emergency care providers, and to fight for a society that condemns racism and cherishes our rich diversity.