

Subject: COVID Update - August 20

Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2020

From: Wendy Bringas <WendyB@baptisthealth.net> **On Behalf Of** Bo Boulenger

Importance: High

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the past week, we have seen the number of COVID-19 cases continuing to decrease across our hospitals, with discharges outpacing admissions. The trends we're seeing are similar across the state, and that's very encouraging. Across our hospitals, there has been a decrease of approximately 24 percent in COVID-19 hospitalizations from a week ago, and a decrease of approximately 35 percent from two weeks ago. It's only because of the exemplary work of our entire team that we're where we are today. The intensity of effort and compassion by our caregivers has helped thousands of patients, which is remarkable and very much appreciated across the organization and our community.

While there has been a decrease in the number of patients with COVID-19 in our Med/Surg units, our ICUs continue to be very busy. As we know, COVID-19 can be a long illness and patients who get very sick, particularly in our ICUs often require care for an extended period of time. It takes the support of every department to ensure we are able to deliver this high level of care, and I am grateful for everyone's continued dedication- especially those on the front lines.

Staffing Update

We are thankful for the rapid response nurses and staff from outside of our system who have supported our frontline caregivers during the surge. We will be extending the engagement for a portion of these additional personnel through the month of September, primarily to support our ICU teams where necessary.

Elective Surgeries

We continue to evaluate our capacity for elective surgeries and procedures including those that require overnight stays on a facility basis. Currently, there are no restrictions at our hospitals in Monroe or Palm Beach counties. In Miami-Dade, some of our hospitals have resumed surgeries with overnight and longer lengths of stay where bed capacity and staffing allows. Generally, surgical scheduling remains fluid as we balance providing regular care for our community with the challenges of the pandemic.

Recovery Update

Our Recovery Task Force, led by Nancy Batista-Rodriguez and Dr. Jonathan Fialkow, is meeting weekly and focused on safely navigating us toward providing services for people in the community who may have been delaying care. We look forward to the next phase of our recovery, which will allow us to help more people get the healthcare they need. We continue to emphasize to our community the importance of not putting off necessary care, and we encourage you to let your family and friends know that our facilities are safe places to receive care. Their health and wellbeing is our top priority.

Updated Visitor Guidelines

As of Monday, August 17, our outpatient facilities (with the exception of Miami Cancer Institute and Lynn Cancer Institute) are following an enhanced visitor policy. At BOS Imaging, Urgent Care Centers, Urgent Care Express Centers and the OCED (off-campus emergency department), one adult visitor may accompany patients. Ambulatory Surgery Centers are now allowing one visitor in most sites unless site-specific circumstances prevent this from occurring. All visitors will be screened. Anyone with COVID-19

symptoms, including fever, cough or shortness of breath, will not be allowed to enter our facilities as a visitor.

Hospitals and physician practices will evaluate their visitor policies as conditions evolve and may expand access to visitors according to their specific circumstances.

Community Antibody IgG (Blood) Testing

In an effort to continue to meet the needs of our community, we are offering antibody testing at our Urgent Care and Urgent Care Express Centers. Patients can learn more on our [antibody testing webpage](#) and reserve their spot using the Save My Spot feature on our website.

Employee Screenings

As a reminder, the Workplace Passport employee screening tool through Virgin Pulse will go live on Monday, August 24. Please ensure that you have downloaded the Virgin Pulse app and registered your account. [Click here](#) for instructions.

Hurricane Season

We are closely watching the tropics, as there are currently two disturbances (Tropical Depression 13 and 14) in the Atlantic with the potential to impact South Florida. Tropical Depression 13 is expected to strengthen into a tropical storm later today, and could become a hurricane as it tracks toward Florida early next week. I encourage you to review your personal/family plans, to include pets, and know what is expected of you at work pre- and post-storm/hurricane. Please [click here](#) for helpful internal information and tips about hurricanes as well as other emergencies. We will share more information as needed.

Thank you for your commitment to caring for our community and for each other through incredible challenges, particularly over the past several weeks. As we begin to focus again on recovery efforts and expanding care in the communities we serve, please remember to take time to rest and recharge.

With gratitude,
Bo

Bo Boulenger

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