

**From:** Wendy Bringas <WendyB@baptisthealth.net> on behalf of Bo Boulenger <BoB@baptisthealth.net>

**Date:** Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 5:28 PM

**To:** DG-BHSF Everyone <DG-BHSFEveryone@baptisthealth.net>, DG-BT Everyone Automated <DG-BTEveryoneAutomated@baptisthealth.net>, BRRH Everyone <BRRHEveryone@brrh.com>, BRRH-BocaCare All <BocaCareAll@brrh.com>

**Subject:** COVID-19 Update - December 17

Dear Baptist Health Family,

This is a historic week at Baptist Health. Yesterday marked a significant milestone and turning point in our fight against COVID-19. Thanks to our collaboration with Jackson Health System, we received our first batch of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines and began vaccinating our frontline employees. Daphne Pierre, an ICU nurse at South Miami Hospital, was our first employee to receive the vaccine (her photo is below). On our first day of vaccination, 622 of our frontline employees and medical staff members were vaccinated with their first dose. That is cause for celebration, and I applaud everyone who is involved in the vaccination planning and process.



The coordination and teamwork that it takes to put together a vaccination event of this magnitude in a short amount of time cannot be understated. On behalf of our senior leadership team, I'd like to offer my gratitude to the Pharmacy, Environmental Health & Safety, Occupational Health Supply Chain and Security teams, along with many others who continue to work tirelessly to make sure our frontline personnel are protected. The exciting news about the start of our vaccinations was covered in a [Good Morning America segment](#) and by many other media outlets, including the [Miami Herald](#) and [NBC6](#), that attended yesterday's press conference at the Hilton.

I am very proud of all of our accomplishments this year leading up to this week. The pandemic and all of the resulting challenges have unleashed the hidden power of our resilience. Our unwavering focus on a common goal has been such a strong force in our response. I'm truly inspired by the nonstop tremendous teamwork that has enabled us to care for an increasing number of patients with COVID-19 and also coordinate the logistics for the administration of this much-anticipated vaccine.

Today, the FDA is meeting to review emergency authorization use for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. We expect that we will also get an allotment of the Moderna vaccine once it has approval.

We continue to see a steadily increasing amount of COVID-19 related admissions, and we also continue to discharge many patients daily. We're currently caring for 385 patients who are

COVID-19 positive or suspected positive, and we have discharged more than 8,600. Our hospitals are very busy, and we are working as a system to manage our volume.

### **Vaccination Process**

We will continue to receive additional shipments of the COVID-19 vaccine on a rolling basis in the coming weeks and months, and expect to be able to provide the vaccine to all employees and medical staff members who wish to receive it, during your corresponding phase/priority group. We are pleased that interest in taking the vaccine has been very high. All of our current time slots at the Hilton vaccination location are currently booked, but we will open additional vaccination opportunities for the week of December 28<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton and at other sites including in Palm Beach County. We will communicate these additional vaccination dates and times with you as soon as possible. Please pay close attention to upcoming communications for updates to our registration processes.

### **Flu Vaccine Updated Guidance**

The COVID-19 vaccine should not be taken within 14 days of taking any other vaccine, including the flu shot. If any employees who are interested in getting the COVID vaccine have not received a flu shot yet, please make the COVID-19 vaccine your priority, and take the COVID-19 vaccine before the flu vaccine.

We are so grateful that our front line staff are receiving this vaccine for their safety. Remember, even after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine it is important to continue wearing a mask, maintain social distancing and wash hands frequently. We've worked so hard and are making progress, so we can't let our guard down. Let's continue to be patient with one other and inspire each other to hang in there. This week we can see the rays of brighter days ahead. While we still have a lot to overcome, I have no doubt we will overcome it together and be stronger than ever.

This holiday season, there is so much to reflect on and a lot to be hopeful for. You can feel proud of being part of a huge family that is taking care of its even larger South Florida family during a time like no other. Thank you for your ongoing compassion and fortitude. I wish you good health, joy and peace with your loved ones during this special time of year.

### **Bo Boulenger**

#### **Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer**

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