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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 - February 11, 2021

Dear Baptist Health Family,

Across the U.S. and in Florida, total numbers of COVID-19 cases are showing a decline. This weakening is a good sign, and we see light at the end of the tunnel. In our state and in South Florida, the rate of transmission remains below 1. As progress is being made on the COVID-19 front, we are closely monitoring reports about the coronavirus variants that are more highly transmissible and increasing throughout the U.S. We all need to continue our safety measures in this constantly changing environment and do our best to protect ourselves and others.

This Week's Numbers at a Glance

- Currently, there are **327** individuals throughout our facilities who are COVID-19 positive or suspected to be positive, which is a decrease of nearly 4% from last week, and approximately 19% from two weeks ago.
- We have discharged more than **11,700** patients who were treated for COVID-19.
- We have vaccinated more than **30,500** people including eligible employees, medical staff and eligible members of our community, with more than **28,700** of those having received the second dose of the vaccine.

Vaccine Update

Statewide, more than 2 million people have been vaccinated, and over 823,000 of those individuals have received both doses. At Baptist Health, we continue to provide second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to those who have already received their first dose, and we are continuing to work through our list of remaining employees and medical staff members **in priority group 1A** who wish to receive a first dose. Baptist Health has also received a very limited amount of vaccines, which the state has mandated be used only for first doses for medically vulnerable patients who are under 65. We are following the state's direction and are beginning by using these doses for patients of Miami Cancer Institute and Lynn Cancer Institute who meet this criteria. We are communicating with those patients directly.

Additionally, the state is offering residents a way to pre-register for the vaccine and save their place in line as vaccines become available, by visiting <https://myvaccine.fl.gov>. Anyone who has not yet received a vaccine is encouraged to register on this site.

Guidance for Wearing a Mask

CDC continues to study the effectiveness of different types of masks and update their recommendations as new scientific evidence becomes available. CDC recently conducted a

study in a laboratory that tested the performance of different mask combinations. This week, the CDC updated its mask recommendations to include wearing well-fitting face masks or two masks at a time to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by source control. For best protection, the CDC says to wear a mask with at least two layers and to make sure the mask fits snugly against your face. The study also noted that wearing any type of mask performed significantly better than not wearing a mask. The masks that Baptist Health provides its employees for source control have several layers of protection and are effective against the spread of infections, including COVID-19, when properly worn. Masks should completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of face.

For patient care activities:

- Continue to use a Baptist Health-provided and properly fitted medical grade mask for all direct patient care activities (i.e, FDA/ASTM designated surgical/procedure mask).
- Continue to use a Baptist Health-provided and properly fitted NIOSH-approved respirator during high risk direct patient care activities (i.e., aerosol generating procedures). The use of a mask over an N95/N99 respirator is NOT recommended as it may impede the required fit. In addition, the physiological effects normally imposed by respirator use could be magnified by the addition of an extra layer.

As always, please continue to help slow the spread of COVID-19 by practicing the following:

- Adhere to public health mitigations, even after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Wear a mask to protect others as well as yourself.
 - A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially when indoors around people who don't live in your household.
 - CDC does not recommend using face shields or goggles as a substitute for masks. Goggles or other eye protection may be used in addition to a mask. Face shields and goggles are primarily used to protect the eyes of the person wearing it.
 - CDC does not recommend using masks with exhalation valves or vents. The hole in the material may allow your respiratory droplets to escape and reach others.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol after touching or removing your mask.

Supportive Resources for Employees & Physicians

We have been working through challenging and uncertain circumstances for a long period of time, and we are so grateful for your dedication and the compassionate care you help provide every day. Your well-being and mental health are very important to us, so if you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, please know that we have resources available to help. Our dedicated [Employee Support site](#) has a section on Emotional Support, which includes contact information to connect with Pastoral Care, LifeWorks Counselors (Aetna Counselors for Boca Regional employees), along with Resiliency Support Groups and numerous helpful webinar sessions, which are updated daily. Explore recently added information about [Pets and Our Well-Being](#) on the site, and watch for details about a new

PineappleProud initiative next week. For physicians and other providers, please be sure to visit [Physician & APPs - BE WELL \(baptisthealth.net\)](https://www.baptisthealth.net) for additional resources and support services. Feelings of stress and anxiety are common during these times and we want you to know that we are here to support you as we care for our community together.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to taking care of each other and our community,

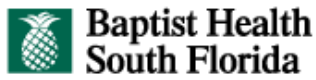
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