

**Subject:** COVID-19 Update – October 22, 2020  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 6:54 PM  
**From:** Bo Boulenger  
**To:** DG-BHSF Everyone; DG-BT Everyone Automated

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are encouraged that our volume of COVID-19-related admissions hasn't changed materially in the last six weeks and has been manageable; however, we are seeing COVID-19 cases tick up in other parts of the country. We are working closely with the Florida Department of Health and closely monitoring the trends and data so that we can plan for the possibility of an increased number of patients with COVID-19 at our facilities. Currently, we are caring for 127 patients who are either positive for COVID-19 or are under investigation, which is a 7 percent increase from last week. This number has fluctuated slightly in the past couple of weeks, but is relatively stable. We have discharged more than 6,800 patients with COVID-19.

We are using this time to make sure that we are prepared if we are challenged again with a fall surge. We have learned a lot from the experiences of the past few months and we have much better tools in our tool kit, including better therapies to care for our patients. Please continue to practice good hand hygiene, masking and social distancing. The only way we'll be able to help keep our numbers low is by working together to stop the spread of the virus.

Following a recent CDC study showing that multiple short exposures increases the risk of transmission, the CDC has revised the definition of what it means to be a "close contact" of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. The CDC had previously defined a "close contact" as someone who spent at least 15 consecutive minutes within six feet of a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. The updated guidance, which public health officials rely on to conduct contact tracing, now defines a close contact as "someone who was within six feet of an infected individual for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period." This change underscores the importance of wearing masks and practicing social distancing to reduce the risk of transmission.

As we look back on the past year, I could not be more proud of how our team has cared for our community and supported each other. Your unwavering dedication to patient care was a beacon of light and hope for South Florida; and your commitment to each other was incredible. We recently received the results of our annual Glint engagement survey, and as a whole, Baptist Health received a score of 84 – which is well above the top 20 percent benchmark of 79, indicating we scored significantly higher than most top rated companies. Eighty-one percent of employees participated, which gives us great information and validity to the survey. On behalf of the entire executive leadership team, I'd like to thank you for all that you do every day for our patients, colleagues and for Baptist Health. We truly value your feedback through Glint and we thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

#### **PPE**

Our amazing Supply Chain team, Safety Officers, and Infection Preventionists continue their hard work to ensure the appropriate use of PPE. They are also continuously working to make sure we have sufficient supplies of PPE as we care for our community now, and in the case of any potential surges of patients with COVID-19. Please continue to use PPE judiciously.

#### **Flu Vaccination**

Remember to schedule your flu shot appointment, if you haven't already, in order to protect yourself, your loved ones and our patients this flu season. The vaccine is required for all Baptist Health employees, employees, leaders, medical staff, students, contract workers and vendors. You can make a reservation for a Baptist Health flu vaccination event through the [Flu App Center](#).

### **Infection Prevention Week**

International Infection Prevention Week is October 18-24. Baptist Health's Infection Control and Prevention team is always essential in protecting all of us from common infections, and now they are instrumental in helping us fight the ongoing pandemic. Join me in honoring them for their leadership, perseverance and resilience as they work tirelessly to protect patients and those on the frontlines from COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. We are forever grateful for their expertise in keeping us safe and healthy.

### **Pharmacy Week**

It is also National Pharmacy Week, which gives us a chance to acknowledge the invaluable contributions that pharmacists and technicians make to patient care in hospitals, outpatient clinics, and other healthcare settings. The Baptist Health Pharmacy Department does an outstanding job of ensuring we have the necessary medications to provide for the safe and effective treatment of our patients. Their diligent work is vital to the high-quality care we provide and to the health and well-being of our community. We are extremely proud of their dedication and innovation in navigating challenges presented by the pandemic and their ongoing work to help to lower the cost of drugs. Please join me in recognizing our Pharmacy team.

### **Common Review Evaluation Process Reminder**

By now, leaders should all be finalizing their employees' Common Review Performance Evaluations. All staff performance evaluations need to be completely finalized by Sunday, November 8 – which includes entering the leader evaluation comments and ratings, conducting performance discussion meetings and completing both the leader and employee evaluation sign-offs in PeopleSoft.

### **New Intranet Coming Soon**

Baptist Health's intranet is currently being revamped and it will be unveiled to all employees next month. The new platform will be accessible to all employees, whether you are working at a computer or in a patient care area. This internal communications site is designed to be a one-stop resource for the information, news and tools you need to do your job and stay connected. System-wide and entity-specific content will be added on a regular basis to keep you in the loop of what's happening around the organization. Stay tuned for more information.

As we forge ahead with our recovery efforts, it's important to note there is a nationwide trend of lower volumes in emergency rooms. In our community, like in many other parts of the country, we have seen a decrease in the number of ER visits for such symptoms as chest pain, headaches and syncope. We want to ensure people in our community are getting the right type of care at the right time. This means we must continue to emphasize our focus on safety and not delaying care. All of us have the ability to spread the word and assure others that no matter what type of care they need, Baptist Health facilities are here to care for them in a safe environment that protects our patients and caregivers alike. Please continue to take good care of yourselves and encourage others to do the same.

Thank you,  
Bo

**Bo Boulenger**

**Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer**

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