

October 26, 2021



Hi Team –

What a fun and exciting time to be a sports fan in Cincinnati! With the Bengals now in first place in the AFC North after soundly defeating Baltimore on Sunday, and the UC Bearcats still undefeated and ranked #2 in college football again this week, our city and two of the teams we passionately cheer for have an incredible amount of positive momentum going into the rest of their seasons.

And that positive momentum carries over to the encouraging progress our TriHealth Team continues to make in our work to vaccinate ALL of our team members and physicians. Now with just a few days to go until our October 31 COVID vaccination deadline, I am pleased to report that nearly 98% of our team members and physicians have stepped forward in the name of patient and team member safety to support our vaccine requirement either by becoming fully vaccinated or by obtaining an approved exemption or deferment. Through the many unexpected twists and turns of our COVID-19 journey, our decision-making has always been grounded by the simple yet powerful sacred oath, “First, do no harm,” guiding us to make every effort possible to avoid unintentionally harming those we serve. Whether you received your COVID vaccine months ago or just last week, I want to express my deep gratitude to each of you for living out our mission of service while observing the sacred oath to “Do No Harm” to our patients and community. Thanks to your support, TriHealth will continue to safely care for our community in their time of greatest need.



I know that the past two years of battling wave upon wave of this deadly virus have been unbelievably stressful, and the uncertainty surrounding the vaccination status of fellow team members has compounded that stress. As I have stated before, we do not want to lose a single team member or physician due to this requirement. So, while we hope and expect to have 100% of team members on board and ready to serve, we will know with certainty where we stand on COVID vaccine compliance on Sunday. And whatever the final number is, we will be ready and our staffing plans for November 1 and beyond will ensure that TriHealth continues to deliver the region’s safest and highest-quality care to our patients – which they have come to expect from TriHealth when they turn to us for care.

For the relatively few remaining team members who have not yet decided to become vaccinated, our Employee Health vaccine clinics have adequate supplies of the single-dose J&J vaccine. [Please click this link](#) to schedule an appointment today so that you can continue to be a part of our amazing TriHealth team and remain on work schedules after October 31! Those seeking the two-dose mRNA vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna) need to be fully vaccinated by October 31 or will be placed on unpaid administrative leave, but they will have the opportunity to return to work upon becoming fully vaccinated up until December 31. Team members on administrative leave cannot use PTO and must arrange for payment of the team member portion of benefit premiums if they wish to continue benefit coverage.

#### Vaccine Booster and COVID Updates

Beyond the encouraging progress we’ve made with our internal vaccination requirement, the recent CDC decision on COVID boosters and the continuing decline of COVID transmission lend further optimism to better,

brighter days just around the corner! Last Friday, the CDC endorsed and FDA approved Moderna and J&J vaccines to be used as boosters in addition to the previously approved Pfizer booster. With roughly two-thirds of the eligible population now vaccinated, there is still work to be done to deliver first doses to millions of Americans to help move our country a step closer to herd immunity. The approval of these new boosters coupled with the rise in vaccination rates nationally will help further protect our most vulnerable populations, including healthcare workers, and bring an end to this pandemic. And the CDC and FDA are expected to soon act to approve vaccines for children over the age of 5. With these approvals, vaccine booster shots are now available to all TriHealth team members regardless of their initial vaccine. [Click this link](#) to learn more about how to schedule your appointment for a booster at a TriHealth vaccine clinic.

We continue to be encouraged by regional and national trends which point to the steady, though slow decline in new COVID cases and associated hospitalizations and deaths. Nationally, new COVID infections have dropped 13% week-over-week and COVID-related hospital admissions decreased by 5% in that same timeframe. On Monday, COVID hospitalizations at TriHealth were at 70, well below the high just a few weeks ago of 120 inpatients. And with the positivity rate and R-factor continuing to decline, all signs are suggesting that the worst of this fourth wave is over and we will soon be transitioning to an endemic or more manageable state.

### COVID-19 Weekly Update

- 70 COVID-positive patients in TriHealth hospitals with 13 on ventilators in the ICU.
- 8.8% COVID positivity rate overall, with a 12.1% positivity rate for symptomatic patients tested at TriHealth over past two weeks. Target positivity rate is under 5%!
- R-factor for 14-county region now at 0.89. Hamilton County R-factor now at 0.88. Target R-factor is below 1.0.

### Continuing to Invest In and Reward Our People

For more than a half-decade, we have worked to make TriHealth and our culture the place where team members most want to work, where physicians most want to practice, and where the entire community increasingly chooses to receive their healthcare. In the face of the current COVID-fueled labor shortages, TriHealth has once again been proactive in putting in place leading-edge initiatives and programs to support our people and set ourselves apart from other health systems and employers in our region. And we are doing this to both retain our extraordinary team members and to attract “more than our fair share” of top talent, all as we operate in perhaps the most competitive labor market in decades. At TriHealth, we take pride in being an industry leader that provides innovative solutions to assist our team members to live happy, healthy lives — even in the midst of a once-in-a-century pandemic — by offering targeted enhancements to our compensation, benefits, and well-being offerings. By remaining highly competitive with these enriched benefit and compensation programs, we can better retain our current talented team members and recruit the “best of the best” as together we continue our work to Get Healthcare Right. And by operating proactively from a position of strength—as opposed to waiting for these challenges to worsen — TriHealth can offer a diverse set of enhancements to meet the needs of each team member no matter their role or tenure. We stay TriHealth Strong by showing you how much we value our team members every day, so you can stay TriHealth Proud!

In August, we announced a bold set of initiatives to recognize, thank and tangibly reward our team members and physicians for their many sacrifices — and the hardships they have endured — throughout this seemingly unending pandemic. This first set of bold initiatives and incentives included the gift of Appreciation Station points for becoming vaccinated, a special COVID SERVE Bonus ranging from \$500 to \$1,200 for full-time team members (and pro-rated for part-time team members) to be paid out on December 10, a one-time gift of up to one week of Paid Time Off to give you additional time off to rest and recharge, re-introduction of the Helping Hands and Vaccine Support Programs, and enhanced on-site amenities and “mobile” wellness services such as meditation classes and chair massages.

Our Senior Leadership Team and I are now excited to announce and roll out the second set of investments we are making in our team members, to thank you for all that you do – every day, in every interaction – for our patients, for our health system, and for one another. These initiatives, which you can read about in greater detail by [clicking this link](#), include:

- Increasing the base pay rates on some of the hottest and most difficult to recruit jobs throughout TriHealth, such as Pharmacy Techs, Med Techs and several roles in Revenue Cycle to remain highly competitive in the rapidly changing labor market for these positions.
- Helping pay off federal student loan debt through enrollment in our newly created TriHealth Student Loan Repayment program. Through this program, TriHealth will help pay off up to \$5,250 in federal student loans, every year until 2025. Eligibility and enrollment information will be shared in November, and payments can start as soon as December.
- Increasing the PTO sellback maximum, for Calendar Year 2022 only, from 80 hours to up to 120 hours! And for further financial flexibility, you can choose multiple sellback dates. Make sure you elect your PTO sellback during Open Enrollment, which runs November 1-12.
- In addition, there will be a temporary moratorium on PTO bank maximums to allow you to continue to accrue PTO without a cap until the end of January 2022 in recognition of the added demands imposed by COVID which has limited all of our ability to take needed time off.
- And, for our team members who earn between our \$15/hour Living Wage and \$22/hour and who rely on public transportation, we are offering mass transit vouchers good for unlimited rides each month. Just contact the HR Services Center for details and applications. This is intended to help team members who have difficulty finding reliable transportation to get to and from work.

Lastly, I'm happy to share that nearly 2,500 team members who were awarded Appreciation Station points for becoming fully vaccinated by August 31 have traded their points for hundreds of great prizes! Team members who became fully vaccinated after August 31 will have the same 405 Appreciation Station points added to their account in early November. If you haven't spent your points yet, go out to [Appreciation Station](#) and shop!

In all, TriHealth has invested more than \$30 million over and above existing salaries and benefits to help support the financial, physical and emotional well-being of our team members and physicians as we battle through what are hopefully the final days of this pandemic. And every dollar we have spent – and will continue to spend – in support of our people is an investment in you, as you – our valued team members and physicians – are our most important asset and what makes TriHealth great!

Thanks for all you do...and Go Bearcats and Bengals!!!