

February 1, 2022



Hi Team –

The Cincinnati Bengals are headed to the Super Bowl! After a thrilling come-from-behind victory over the Kansas City Chiefs, the team's seemingly improbable playoff streak puts them one win away from their franchise's first championship. So, we have big plans to recognize the Bengals' historic run with a weeklong orange-and-black celebration befitting their first Super Bowl appearance in 33 years. Kicking off next Monday,

February 7, and continuing every day until Super Bowl Sunday, we will offer up fun daily activities and contests to cheer on our hometown team – and also for a chance to win some really cool prizes along the way! Stay tuned for more information later this week...and Go Bengals!

COVID Updates

Following months of increasing COVID infections, the most current data (see COVID sidebar for specifics) indicates that we have likely seen and managed through the worst of this Omicron-fueled surge. Over the past week, the region's R-factor and positivity rate have fallen sharply, leading to a steady decline in new COVID cases and hospitalizations. This includes TriHealth COVID admissions, which have dropped by nearly 20% in that time. And while we are encouraged by this drop in cases, the total number of hospitalizations remains high at 184, which continues to challenge our system and stretch our amazing frontline caregivers and support staff. So, our Surge and Capacity management work will continue through the coming weeks as we maintain sharp daily and hourly focus on throughput, bed management, provision of elective care and staffing – all of the operational “levers” which have enabled TriHealth to successfully care for patients at their time of greatest need throughout this two-year pandemic.

COVID-19 Weekly Update

- 184 COVID-positive patients in TriHealth hospitals with 35 on ventilators in the ICU.
- 28.5% COVID positivity rate in the region, with a 38.7% 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 0.73. Hamilton County R-factor now at 0.64. Target R-factor is below 1.0.

Updated forecasting models are pointing towards a continued decline in COVID transmission, new cases and hospitalizations through winter and into spring and summer. And while we are hopeful that this represents the start of a gradual return to a “new normal,” we aren't declaring victory quite yet. As COVID hopefully soon transitions from “pandemic” to “endemic”, this does not necessarily mean the virus will become less transmissible or severe, or that it no longer represents a serious public health threat. An endemic COVID will still infect people – friends, neighbors, relatives – in some cases leading to serious disease, hospitalizations and even deaths. So, it is incumbent upon us to continue to utilize all available tools – vaccines, therapeutics, masks, social distancing, etc. – to bring this pandemic under control and to reduce the likelihood that new more severe variants will emerge.

Get Boosted to Protect Yourself and Those We Serve

While not all of us are on the frontlines, each of us can do our part to help protect ourselves, our loved ones, our fellow team members and our patients from COVID infection and severe illness by getting boosted. With vaccine effectiveness waning over time, overwhelming evidence now supports the importance of “up to date” vaccination – including boosters – in preventing severe COVID illness. This includes a new study from the United Kingdom showing a booster shot reduces the risk of death from Omicron by 95%! Team members who have not yet received their booster are strongly encouraged to schedule their appointment today. Simply [click this link](#) to schedule at a TriHealth Employee Health clinic at Bethesda North Outpatient Imaging (BNOI) or Good Samaritan

Hospital. And if you received your booster shot outside of TriHealth, [click here](#) to submit your updated vaccine record to Employee Health.

Celebrating Black History Month at TriHealth

February marks the beginning of Black History Month. Guided by our system's values of Respecting All People and Valuing Differences, Black History Month's celebration of African Americans' many contributions provides us important insights and lessons on how we can bring to life our shared beliefs or values, each and every day to deliver more inclusive and equitable care to our patients.



This year, our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) team has adopted the theme “[Black Health and Wellness](#),” to acknowledge the historic health disparities facing many African American communities revealed by this COVID pandemic. These are the same inequities that are the focus of our Population Health work and our overarching mission of improving health and caring for ALL people in our community.

As a part of our month-long celebration, we will honor the significant contributions of African Americans in healthcare and science throughout our nation's history. Be on the lookout this month for:

- A selection of stories providing inspiration and celebration of the many contributions of African American physicians, clinicians and team members at TriHealth
- A Black History trivia contest on Bridge open to all team members for the chance to win really cool prizes
- Performances from our newly formed DEI Choir
- A Black History poster contest for team members involved in an Employee Resource Group (ERG), hosted by TRIBE (TriHealth Resource Initiative for Black Employees)

As we commemorate and celebrate the meaningful and lasting contributions of African Americans across our community and nation during Black History Month, we should also use this opportunity to seek ways for each of us to further advance TriHealth's DEI mission to improve the health and wellness of ALL those we serve.

School to Work: Making a Difference in the Lives of our Students

In my previous Weekly Update, I discussed how the initial success of our groundbreaking School to Work Program (STWP) helped us raise nearly \$15 million from TriHealth and our two sponsors, Bethesda Inc., and CommonSpirit, to financially support the STWP in perpetuity. So, it was especially rewarding to see and read the heartwarming story of one of our own STWP graduates last week (click [here](#)). Benya Coleman, a Hughes High School senior and a graduate of our first STWP cohort, was awarded a full scholarship to study Medical Sciences at the University of Cincinnati next fall. Benya credited the STWP for broadening her career horizons and sparking her interest in pursuing a career in Obstetrics. And thanks in large part to the hands-on, real-world education she received while working at Good Samaritan Hospital during the STWP, this scholarship will allow Benya to become the first member of her family to attend college! Creating opportunities to open a student's eyes to the wide range of career possibilities in healthcare is exactly what makes the STWP such an essential workforce development and DEI initiative – one which both creates a more diverse talent pool for TriHealth and can significantly change the lives of our students as they become young adults. Congratulations, Benya, STWP Manager Mike Jones, and the entire STWP team!

Every day, the light at the end of this dark COVID tunnel is getting a little brighter. And that is because of you – the very best healthcare team anywhere! Let's stay strong, engaged, and united through the remaining battle ahead against COVID, so that we can continue Getting Healthcare Right for all those we serve! Thank you for all you do.