

January 18, 2022



Hi Team –

How about our Cincinnati Bengals! For the first time in more than three decades, the Bengals won a playoff game, and in the process have helped energize our city at a time we all need it. Let's hope the positive momentum from last weekend's win continues... deep into the playoffs and all the way to the Super Bowl!

COVID Updates

Though we are far from declaring victory over COVID-19, we remain cautiously optimistic that this current Omicron-fueled surge will peak within our region over the next 2-3 weeks. Nationally, case rates and hospitalizations are beginning to decline in the northeastern states where Omicron first arrived. And there is now encouraging news from the Cleveland area reporting a sharp decline in new cases and hospitalizations after their health systems were pushed to the brink in recent weeks. This lends further credence to our expectations for Greater Cincinnati to experience a short, intense surge over the next few weeks followed by a gradual decline. Here at TriHealth, our COVID inpatient census has been relatively stable for the past week, ranging between 225 and 235 hospitalized COVID patients – still above previous highs, but an encouraging sign.

COVID-19 Weekly Update

- 228 COVID-positive patients in TriHealth hospitals with 23 on ventilators in the ICU.
- 33.4% COVID positivity rate in the region, with a 46.5% 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 1.13. Hamilton County R-factor now at 1.04. Target R-factor is below 1.0.

As you know, we have been preparing for a potentially overwhelming surge in COVID hospitalizations for each of four waves over the past two years. And as the more transmissible Omicron variant has replaced Delta intensifying this current fourth wave, we have continued to be successful in accommodating every patient in need by activating key elements of our Crisis Surge Management Plan. Proactively managing throughput and collaborating with physicians to stage and sometimes defer elective cases, we have only needed to operationalize a handful of semi-private beds to date in order to meet the increased demand for inpatient care. And ensuring appropriate, experienced bedside staffing for ALL patients – COVID and non-COVID alike – has continued to be our highest and most important priority in responding to this crisis. Our team-based nursing model has been deployed at our flagship hospitals and is being utilized elsewhere as needed across our other inpatient and ambulatory settings. We also continue to supplement our bedside caregivers and support staff through the Helping Hands program, incentives to reward team members for stepping up to take additional shifts, bold strategies to retain and attract talent, new hiring and use of temporary agency support. All of these proactive measures are guided by our crisis management philosophy of preparing for the worst and working TOGETHER to achieve the best possible outcome so that we can continue to care for our patients when and where they need us most. And we are doing just that as TriHealth team members, physicians, and leaders demonstrate why they are the best healthcare team and the best patient-centered culture anywhere!!!

Join TriHealth in Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – Tomorrow at 12pm

Despite the necessary focus on this pressing Omicron-fueled surge, we must not lose sight of the significance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which TriHealth and our nation celebrated yesterday. As a faith-based organization that carries on the legacy of our founders – the German Methodist Deaconesses and Catholic Sisters of Charity – we align ourselves with Dr. King's lifelong mission of equality and justice by caring for ALL people we serve with

compassion, respect, and dignity – including and especially those who are underserved and marginalized in our community.

So, to celebrate the life, legacy and teachings of Dr. King, team members and physicians are encouraged to join us tomorrow for a special livestream event from 12-1pm. This celebration, hosted by our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Team and me, will be marked with dance, spoken word, and Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech expressed by TriHealth team members across the system. Click this [link on January 19 at 12 pm](#) to participate in this special Town Hall livestream event.

As we reflect on Dr. King’s life and teachings and the painful lessons learned from this two-year COVID pandemic, one thing is clear...health disparities are real, and they disproportionately affect underserved and underrepresented populations. And this needs to change as we work to Get Healthcare Right! While TriHealth has made great strides on many fronts in strengthening our workplace culture and dramatically improving patient care and access, we know much more is needed at TriHealth and across our industry to create a truly inclusive and equitable healthcare system. Central to our population health vision and philosophy is the need to serve and care for all patients in the same evidence-based way, achieving the same exceptional health outcomes by providing the right care, at the right time and at the right place, for the entire community. Getting there will require each of us to continue to build community trust and embrace the principles Dr. King preached – freedom, equality and justice for all!

Three TriHealth Leaders Recognized as Healthcare Heroes

Throughout this two-year pandemic, there have been many impressive examples at TriHealth of caring for our “entire” community and for our fellow team members – growing evidence of our commitment to our people and to advancing DEI. In fact, as external validation of our DEI and culture work in action, three of our bold community initiatives are now being recognized citywide.



Lynda Garcia; Jeremiah Kirkland; Tashawna Otabil

Three TriHealth leaders – Lynda Garcia, Jeremiah Kirkland, and Tashawna Otabil – have been named as finalists for the 25th Annual Health Care Heroes Awards by the Cincinnati Business Courier. The awards honor those who have made a profound impact on their organizations and healthcare in our larger community through their contributions to: service to patients, research and invention, leadership and management, innovative programs for employees and their services.

- Jeremiah, President and Chief Operating Officer of Good Samaritan Hospital at Evendale, was named a finalist for his innovative work to bring to life a number of unique community collaborations, including teaming with bi3 and Cincinnati Public Schools on the School to Work program and connecting clinicians with community care workers to surround patients with the essential services they need to live their healthiest lives.
- Tashawna, our Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President of Managed Care, was named a finalist in the Community Outreach category for her strong leadership in addressing healthcare disparities and inequities across our community, expanding access to quality care, and creating a more inclusive culture where patients feel welcomed, valued, safe, and well-cared for throughout their healthcare journey.
- Lynda, Vice President of Talent Development and Organizational Effectiveness, was named a finalist in the Manager category for development and leadership of the TriHealth Team Member Resource Center

as a national best practice emergency response in support of TriHealth team members and physicians throughout the now more than two-year COVID-19 pandemic.

Please join me in congratulating Jeremiah, Tashawna and Lynda, the amazing teams they lead and our entire organization for these well-deserved recognitions.

These recognitions serve as an important reminder that despite the many hardships we've faced and the countless sacrifices we've endured throughout this pandemic, TriHealth team members are doing amazing things each and every day to bring our mission to life. Our team members and physicians are impacting the lives of every patient we serve as well as their families and loved ones in so many positive ways, small and large. And while not everyone will receive an award – in fact, most won't – our TriHealth team is made up of true heroes who have the gratitude of our patients, their families and the entire community. On behalf of the TriHealth leadership team, I thank you for all that you are doing.