

December 8, 2020



Following is a transcript of the Weekly Update video published December 8, 2020

[MARK CLEMENT, President & CEO]

Hi Team –

My name is Mark Clement, and I am President and CEO of TriHealth, and joining me today is Jenny Skinner, our System Chief Nursing Executive. We are departing from our traditional written Weekly Update format today to share this week's latest news through this short video. And we are doing this because we want to speak with you directly and personally about the worrisome regional and national growth in new COVID cases and hospitalizations, and to let you know how we, as a system, are preparing for and responding to what is likely to be the most severe wave yet in the pandemic.

As I've shared with you throughout the COVID crisis, the events of this pandemic have been fluid, requiring our system to be nimble and adaptive in our response as new COVID cases and hospitalizations have grown since this public health crisis began earlier this year. The work we have done together in recent months to add and staff nearly 150 new beds, hire new nurses, lower length of stay, and improve patient throughput has been nothing short of remarkable, and it has allowed TriHealth to continue to operate without cancellations or needing to go on diversion. However, as cases continue to rise and other health systems throughout the region reach capacity, it is only a matter of time before the demand for our inpatient services will outpace our current expanded bed capacity, which is why it is now time to begin to implement Phase 3 of our Surge Plan – which will add another roughly 150 beds over time by converting adequately sized private rooms to semi-private rooms and beds.

As we navigate this third, and yes, *final* wave of COVID hospitalizations, I ask you to join me in reflecting on the noble purpose that inspired all of us to choose a career in healthcare. I've spoken with so many of you over the years about what motivates you and why you chose a career in healthcare, and we must now draw from that inspiration – and our calling to serve others in need – in order to persevere through what will likely be the single most important moment of our careers. In many ways, unknowingly we have been preparing for this pandemic throughout our entire careers, and we will be ready! By remaining strong and unified, and committed to share in whatever sacrifice is required to serve, our TriHealth team – more than 12,000 team members, physicians and leaders strong – will prevail in service to our community—a community that needs us now like never before. It has been said, extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, and we are blessed to have the most extraordinary team – all of YOU – who together will get us through this challenge!

Like a winter storm, forecasts are more accurate the closer we get to the storm's arrival. Now that the next and most severe COVID surge is here, we better understand what's ahead, and must put appropriate plans into action. Current trends and projections show we may double the number of COVID cases in our system over the next four to eight weeks – from 170 inpatient cases today to more than 300 in January. So, in the spirit of hoping and working for the best but preparing for the worst – we must do everything we can NOW – to continue to proactively prepare for the coming influx of patients. And the most important thing we can do to be ready for this final wave is to support our people – who are understandably experiencing real COVID fatigue and weariness – so they can be their best and do their best for those we serve over the next 3-4 months, until vaccines flatten the curve and put this pandemic in the “rearview mirror”!! We have been planning for this moment in time for months and are ready for whatever comes next, but it's going to take every single one of us working together as one TriHealth team! Jenny will now provide details about our Phase 3 Surge plans.

[JENNY SKINNER, System Chief Nursing Executive]

Thanks, Mark. Our first priority as we implement Phase 3 of our Surge Plan is to make sure we can staff as many available beds as possible. To achieve this goal, we want to rely, as much as possible, on the generosity, selflessness, and personal dedication of our team members and physicians who are willing to volunteer additional shifts and time. So, we are creating powerful financial incentives to reward our clinical and other staff for picking up extra shifts. Details about the various incentives, including our Crisis Pay model, are being shared with nursing team leaders now and in the coming days. Our hope is that these economic incentives will be sufficient to encourage staff to voluntarily expand schedules, so we will not need to require or mandate extra shifts.

The second priority is to build a four-week staffing schedule to urgently operationalize 40 additional beds each at Good Sam and Bethesda North. This schedule will be flexible and include mechanisms for increasing or decreasing projected staffing in real-time, as our surge census requires.

Our third priority is to finalize the plan for adding yet another 40 beds at both Good Sam and Bethesda – creating 80 new beds at each facility in total – by converting adequately sized private rooms to semi-private. We recognize that returning to semi-private beds is not ideal but is preferable to having to care for patients in a convention center, or even worse, turning patients away. And as we begin to activate Phase 3 of our Surge Plan, we will be working with physician leadership on a day-to-day basis to make decisions about deferring elective services that can preserve inpatient beds and staff. This work is underway with our physicians now and details will be shared with team members who will be impacted by these changes.

Lastly, I want to again thank our nursing teams for the unbelievable courage and commitment shown since the onset of this pandemic to do whatever it takes to ensure our patients receive the best possible care. Throughout the many challenges, and yes, growing fatigue, this incredible team continues to show up each day for our patients and each other, giving their all. And to our many volunteers and support staff – thank you for making it your number one priority to care for our nursing team members as they serve our patients! We need your help like never before to get through this surge, and I encourage anyone who is able to return to the bedside to speak with your “one-up” or a member of the Team Member Resource Center to sign up for Helping Hands shifts.

[MARK CLEMENT]

Thank you, Jenny, for this important message and for your inspiring servant leadership. It’s important that we all understand that none of us are alone in this fight! We are all working together around the clock to meet the evolving needs of this pandemic, and we will continue taking it one moment and one day at time, pushing through the barriers, celebrating even the smallest successes, and supporting each other every step of the way. As importantly, we will continue to find meaningful ways to let you know how grateful we are for your extraordinary work throughout this pandemic – like we did recently with the Healthcare Heroes Financial Awards, which will be paid out later this week. For the first time since the onset of this pandemic 10 months ago, there is light at the end of the tunnel and an end is in sight, as vaccines are now being shipped, and FDA Emergency Use Authorization is expected later this week. But this pandemic is not over yet, and we need to get through the next 3-4 months, which we WILL together because we have the right plan, the right people, and the right patient- centered culture!

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, on behalf of Jenny Skinner and our entire leadership team for renewing your commitment to serve each time you put on your TriHealth badge. We each chose a healthcare profession for a reason... to fulfill our sacred mission to serve and to improve the health of those most in need... and the sense of urgency has never been greater! We are becoming the last line of defense against the COVID surge in our community, and I know, if

we all continue to rally together, giving a little more during this last wave of critical need, we will succeed in fulfilling this vital and lifesaving call to action.

A great leader once said: "Never in the field of human conflict is so much owed by so many, to so few" ... You truly are the heroes of this pandemic, and together we will prevail for the community we serve!