

As chief medical and nursing officers of major health systems in Michigan, it is with a sense of urgency, compassion and responsibility that we appeal to the citizens of our state. Michigan appears to be heading into a fourth COVID-19 surge with rising cases across our communities and hospitals. Unlike previous surges, we finally have free, widely available, highly effective and safe vaccines available to protect you and your family. Throughout this pandemic, no other medicine or intervention has been nearly as effective in preventing serious illness and death as the COVID-19 vaccines. More than 370 million doses have been administered in the United States with remarkable safety. **In fact, the FDA issued full approval of the Pfizer vaccine Aug. 23, reaffirming its effectiveness and safety after reviewing tens of thousands of pages of safety and effectiveness information.**

Our healthcare workers who have been on the front lines of this pandemic for 18 months are disheartened and frustrated to see so many unvaccinated individuals admitted to our hospitals and dying from serious complications of COVID-19 infection. **Nationally, approximately 99% of individuals dying from COVID-19 are unvaccinated.** This is a preventable tragedy. We are concerned about the health and safety of our vulnerable populations including the elderly, those with co-existing medical conditions, our children who are not yet vaccinated and the frontline healthcare workers. In fact, it is most alarming that pediatric hospitalizations are on the rise due to the complications of COVID-19 infection. As kids return to school, the most important thing parents can do is get them vaccinated as soon as they're eligible and urge everyone in your family to mask up in public.

Although there is conflicting information on the strength, duration, and effectiveness of natural immunity from previously having COVID-19, there is robust evidence to show that the vaccine is safe and highly effective even if you have been previously infected and may provide additional immunity. Also, as unvaccinated individuals acquire COVID-19, they may not be aware of the danger of developing long lasting complications of COVID-19, the risks they place on health systems currently stretched to capacity, and the fact that more infections leads to more – and more dangerous – variants.

We are seeing our emergency rooms and hospital beds and intensive care units fill up again with this fourth surge of COVID-19, with more than 1,000 individuals now hospitalized with a preventable virus. This increased volume comes at a time that health systems are experiencing the worst healthcare worker shortages in history. Unfortunately, as the situation worsens, this hinders our ability to care for other patients who are experiencing serious illnesses such as stroke, heart attacks, diabetic complications, obstructive lung disease and trauma regardless of their vaccination status. Our frontline clinical colleagues find it exhausting and disheartening to see more and more patients unnecessarily ill, suffering and dying, despite their long hours at their bedsides and remarkable dedication.

Together, healthcare workers and our citizens have the ability – and a responsibility – to stop this global pandemic. We plead with those of you who remain unvaccinated to get vaccinated now. The vaccine *is* safe and effective. You trust us when you're sick, when you have an

emergency or when you have a chronic health need. Please trust us now when we guide you to get this vaccine.

Signed:

Ascension Health

Charles Husson, DO, Chief Medical Officer

Tammie Steinard, RN, BS, BSN, MHA, ONC, Interim CNO

Battle Creek VA Medical Center

Ketan Shah, MD, Chief of Staff

Natasha Watson MSN, Assoc Director Patient Care Services, Nurse Executive

Beaumont Health

Jeffrey Fischgrund, MD, Chief Clinical Care Programs

Susan Grant, DNP, RN, FAAN, EVP & Chief Nursing Officer

Bronson Healthcare

Scott Larson, MD, SVP, Chief Medical Officer

Denise Neely, BSN, MBA, SVP, Chief Nursing Officer

Chippewa County War Memorial Hospital

Paula Rechner, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Marla Bunker, Chief Operating Officer & Chief Nursing Officer

Covenant HealthCare

Michael Sullivan, MD, MBA, VP/Chief Medical Officer

Patrice Lanczak, MSN, MHA, RN, VP/Chief Nursing Officer

Detroit Medical Center

Rudolph P. Valentini, MD, Group Chief Medical Officer

Sheri L. Underwood, MSN, BSN, Group Chief Nursing Officer

Henry Ford Health System

Adnan R. Munkarah, MD, EVP, Chief Clinical Officer

Barbara W. Rossmann, MS, RN, SVP, Chief Nursing Officer

John D. Dingell VA Medical Ctr

Scott A. Gruber, M.D., Ph.D., MBA; Chief of Staff

Belinda Brown-Tezera, MSN, MBA, FNP-BC; Associate Director of Patient Care Services and Nurse Executive

Mackinac Straits Health System

Susan Strich, MD, Chief of Staff

Mary Kaye Ruegg, Chief Nursing Officer

McLaren Health Care

Michael McKenna, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Metro Health-University of Michigan Health

Ronald G. Grifka, MD, FAAP, FACC, FSCAI, Chief Medical Officer

Steven Polega, MHA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nursing Officer

MidMichigan Health

Lydia A. Watson, MD, CPE, SVP, Chief Medical Officer

Tammy Terrell, MSN, RN, VP, Chief Nursing Officer

Munson Healthcare

Christine Nefcy, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Joseph Santangelo, MD, Chief Quality & Safety Officer

OSF HealthCare St. Francis Hospital & Medical Group

William Hook, MD, Director, Medical Services

Lacey Crabb, Vice President, Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer

ProMedica Health

Kent Bishop MD, FACOG, CPE, President ProMedica Physicians, Chief Medical Officer

Deana Sievert, Chief Nursing Officer for Acute Care, Ambulatory & Providers

Sparrow Health System

Karen Kent VanGorder, MD, SVP/Chief Medical & Quality Officer

Amy Brown, MSN, Chief Nursing Officer

Spectrum Health

Joshua Kooistra, DO, SVP, Chief Medical Officer

Shawn Ulreich, DSc, MSN, RN, SVP Clinical Operations, Chief Nursing Executive

Trinity Health Michigan

Rosalie Tocco-Bradley, PhD, MD, Chief Clinical Officer

Doug R. Dascenzo, DNP, RN, CENP, Regional Chief Nursing Officer

University of Michigan Health

Jeffrey S. Desmond, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Nancy May, DNP, Chief Nurse Executive

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

Mark S. Hausman, Jr., MD, Chief of Staff

Lisa Keel, MSN, RN, Interim Nurse Executive