

COVID-19 has brought us to a crisis crossroads. It's that real; it's that true.

We are worried.

Each of our communities, every household, and every business have made sacrifices and difficult choices to stay safe.

Still, here we are. We are astonished at what could be the largest surge yet in this almost two-year fight with COVID-19.

We are hurting, and we know you are, too.

Members of our community are exhausted, sick, and dying from this virus. We often wonder, 'how has it come to this?' The start of 2021 was so promising with vaccines being made available to the public. Yet, here we are – caring for communities with some of the lowest vaccination rates in the state.

We are overwhelmed, and we need your help.

We will never give up caring for you, your families, and this community. Our challenges have never been greater to give you the care you have grown to know and expect from us.

We are now at the point that hospitals and healthcare systems are challenged with staff and space to care for our patients. Acute care beds are nearing capacity and Intensive care units are full. This creates a domino effect. As the surge of COVID-19 patients continues and units fill up, we cannot forget about other critical patients. It is a daily challenge to find a bed for heart patients, cancer patients, neurological patients, and COVID-19 patients.

We are emotionally drained from the toll of so many patient deaths from this infection. Our community has experienced so much loss. This holiday season you may be grieving a family member or friend, who died due to COVID-19. And the hard part is, many of these deaths could have been prevented if they had been vaccinated. It doesn't have to be like this. Our teams don't have to be pushed to the limit; beds don't need to be full; our community doesn't need to suffer.

Help us help you.

We have a way out. It will mean that we need your help. Now, more than ever, we are asking that you get the COVID-19 vaccine.

Our statistics are troubling and are very real. Sadly, we continue to watch families say their last good-byes to their loved ones.

At Guernsey Health System, when we review seven-day averages, 29% of our hospitalized COVID-19 patients are in intensive care. 3 in every 10 patients is fighting for his or her life. Some of those may not survive.

Only 25% of our hospitalized COVID-19 patients are fully vaccinated.

Almost 38% of our hospitalized COVID-19 patients are under the age of 60.

Only 6% of our hospitalized COVID-19 patients under the age of 60 are fully vaccinated.

We see the successes of vaccinations in Delaware County. They have the highest vaccination rate in the state. They also have one of the lowest infection, hospitalization and mortality rates in Ohio – and by a wide margin.

We see every day that the COVID-19 vaccines work. They save lives.

Additionally, we are beginning to see positive flu cases. It is only a matter of time that the flu season will ramp up. When more patients are in the need of hospitalization, we all will be more strained with space and resources in our hospitals. We need to free up staff to take care of your father, daughter, uncle, grandmother or neighbor. We ask that you get vaccinated.

There is hope.

Vaccines work. Even in COVID-19 breakthrough cases, which are defined as a case after being fully vaccinated, they can lessen the impact from the infection and have been very effective in preventing severe cases of COVID-19 that leads to hospitalization and death.

If you are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, we are begging you to get vaccinated. If you are vaccinated and can get a COVID-19 booster, please get boosted. In addition, we ask that you get your flu vaccine as well as have your kids vaccinated for the flu. All of this can help keep you out of the hospital and free up resources for other emergency and critical care.

For you, for your family, for your community, and for us, the COVID-19 vaccine is our hope to reduce hospitalizations and deaths.

We also ask that you follow other COVID-19 precautions – socially distance, stay home when you're sick, wear a mask and wash your hands often.

You are our best hope for changing this crisis.



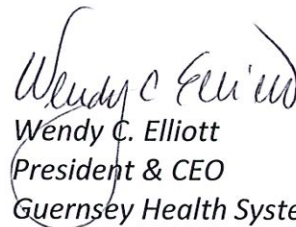
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