



A Message from the President & CEO:

Continuing our COVID-19 precautions



August 24, 2021

Dear Team,

The Delta variant is causing a surge in COVID-19 cases that require hospitalizations and critical care support across Alaska. Between these cases, summer activity-related injuries, and other serious medical issues, Alaska's referral hospital capacity is at a crisis point.

Yesterday I joined an emergency call with CEO's from all of Alaska's largest hospitals, informing the Governor that the majority of referring hospital capacity for critical care support in Alaska is close to full, with the exception of Fairbanks.

Numerous requests for assistance were made to the Governor by all. I recommended he immediately implement basic public health strategies to decrease COVID-19 cases, including universal masking in indoor public places and now that the Food & Drug Administration has fully licensed the Pfizer vaccine, to strongly encourage all employers and schools to require safe vaccination. He and his team began working on the requests and the Governor stated he would hold a press conference to inform Alaskans.

If cases continue to climb at current rates, statewide referral hospital capacity could unfortunately fill up. If that were to happen negative outcomes will increase for both those with severe COVID-19 illness needing hospitalization in critical care units and those who suffer heart attacks, strokes, traumas and other serious yet normally treatable conditions.

As the YK Delta sees exponential transmission of COVID-19 cases and most of the state of Alaska is now a high transmission area as defined by the CDC, YKHC urges all residents to:

- Choose safe vaccination against COVID-19 that can prevent serious illness;
- Wear a mask when in indoor public places;
- Avoid crowds; and

- Wash your hands often.

Now, more than ever, is the time to wear a mask in indoor public places and encourage others to become fully vaccinated. I ask you to reach out to your friends and family who are unvaccinated to share your story of vaccination: how easy it was, why you chose to become vaccinated, whether you had any minor side effects, and anything else you feel is important to share.

Positive encouragement with good information from trusted sources can make a difference!

Yours Sincerely,



Dan Winkelman



Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

PO Box 528
Bethel, AK 99559

You are receiving this email as part of YKHC's internal communications; facilitated by the Communications Division.

Confidentiality Notice: This email message and any attachments may contain confidential and private information of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC), which is protected by law from any further disclosure. If you are not the intended recipient, be aware that any further disclosure, copying, distribution or use of this email or any attachments is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please forward this email and all attachments immediately to YKHC's Privacy Officer at: privacy_officer@ykhc.org and then immediately delete this email and all attachments.