



August 27, 2021

Mayor Elise Partin
P.O. Box 2004
Cayce, South Carolina 29033

Dear Mayor Partin:

Thank you for all that you do to support Lexington Medical Center and our surrounding communities. Providing access to the best health care remains our number one objective. We are reaching out to you today to let you know that this objective is in peril. We are overwhelmed with the latest surge of Covid-19 patients. Our ICU has reached maximum capacity, to include ventilator use, on many days. We have sharply curtailed nonemergent surgical procedures. Every day we have redeployed staff to cover the surging Covid patient census. Yet our Emergency Department continues to fill with patients needing emergency care. This care is greatly inhibited by our current situation.

For example, our situation on Tuesday, August 24th was dire. Our hospital beds were full and we were holding patients in our Emergency Department that would have traditionally already been in a bed upstairs. We had 192 Covid-19 patients who were in isolation. 49 of these patients were in an ICU level of care and 43 were on ventilators because they could not breathe. These patients are critically ill. Their family members could not visit them because they were in isolation. Our nurses and doctors serve as their caregivers and family while they are hospitalized. In between providing life-saving care, our nurses take time daily to call each patient's family to communicate, either good or bad news. About 90% of all Covid-19 patient admissions are **UNVACCINATED**.

As a result of this latest surge, we have had to reallocate our staff and resources in certain areas. This change has resulted in halted or reduced services in some areas:

- Rationing of surgeries that result in an inpatient admission,
- Rationing of patient care that requires critical care beds,
- Screening services for cancer,
- Rehabilitation services,
- Interventional Radiology services for biopsy and treatment,
- Closure of our LMC-Irmo Ambulatory Surgery Center to repurpose staff for critical care needs

We reach out to you today to help us with tomorrow. We believe strongly that mask mandates help prevent the spread of this dreaded disease. We can tell you that those with vaccinations are much less likely to get Covid 19. We can tell you that if you do get Covid 19 and you have been vaccinated, you are much less likely to have a severe illness.

We are respectfully asking you to reinstate mask mandates in your jurisdictions. We are asking you to encourage vaccinations for your general populations. We are asking that you reduce any barriers to the implementation of these recommendations.

As a State, we have tried to rely on a strategy to "trust that individuals will be responsible and make the right decision for themselves". Based on current rates of vaccinations, deaths, hospitalizations, & infections, we are failing.

Thank you for doing your part to protect and preserve public health.

Respectfully,

Tod Augsburger
President & CEO

Dr. Brent Powers
Chief Medical Officer

Dr Mac Nowell
Chief of Staff

