

Throughout the last 20 months you may have heard me say this Covid-19 Pandemic is not a sprint, but a marathon. Well, no one imagined that this would be an Iron Man marathon. Depending on where you are in our state, you are in the HIGH (red) category, the SUBSTANTIAL (Orange) category and if you are one of the few counties in our state that are in the YELLOW (moderate) category, consider yourselves the lucky ones. Here in Pike County, we fluctuate from High to Substantial on any given day. At Troy Regional, we are cautiously optimistic that the volumes we are seeing are actually headed in the right direction. Instead of testing 100 + / day, we are now in a more moderate testing pattern of 30-50, with a positivity rate of 8-12%, with the state positivity rate hovering at 12.1%. As I write this, the U.S. is still averaging more than 2,000 deaths each day from the Covid-19 virus while our total deaths in Pike County are nearing 100. In the Southeast, particularly in the wiregrass area, ICU rooms continue to be close to full. Our hospital team is doing what they always do in times of crisis: pulling together, working long shifts, and risking their own health through their contact with repeated Covid positive patients, all day, every day.

In a recent message I referenced the high volume of infusions, vaccinations, and admitted patients our team continued to deliver care for. I am so grateful for the recent arrival of some Alabama National Guard troops to assist with the continued great work being done here every day. These men and women are deployed for a 30-day assignment and Troy Regional was one of several hospitals in our region to receive this assistance. Staffing struggles are well documented across the country and locally, we are no exception. It has been a grueling 18-20 months for our team and our bodies, minds and spirits get tired.

You've no doubt heard of the federal allocation program which limits the shipments of the monoclonal antibody infusions that have proven so successful in our fight against severe symptoms of positive Covid cases. Troy Regional continues to receive doses sufficient to continue delivering the care our community deserves. We also, and more importantly from a long-term effect, continue to offer Covid-19 vaccines every Friday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with no appointment necessary.

I am continually grateful for the community support shown to the team at Troy Regional. Our team is tired but with continued support, better days will be ahead. We can't run this marathon every day, so I ask again, please do your part and get vaccinated. Spread the word, not the virus.

Rick E. Smith, FACHE  
Chief Executive Officer  
Troy Regional Medical Center