

All 67 counties in Alabama are currently at high risk of Covid-19 spread. All 67 High risk.

The Delta variant is affecting far more people than the previous variant we saw during 2020 and early 2021. Experts are saying that 1 person can infect up to 8 people with the Delta variant where the previous rate was only 2 people. And we thought the initial Covid -19 virus was bad. In Alabama this week, hospitalizations are up 133% over last week. Over 2200 people are hospitalized across our state as I write this message. That is the highest number since January of 2021 when we all thought the worst days were upon us. Experts in the field are predicting this recent surge to increase and that more admissions will certainly follow. Only 87 beds in intensive Care units across the state remain available and 318 patients are on ventilators right now. Currently, 33 pediatric patients are hospitalized in Alabama, a stark change from the last surge that saw 10-12 kids in our hospitals. More locally, testing at Troy Regional is ramping back up and our lab team is conducting tests on more than 70 people each day. Our positivity rate has been between 25-35% each day. Some may think that this Covid-19 issue doesn't affect me or some may not even believe that it is a real issue, but consider this, if unvaccinated people continue to be admitted and stress the system, we may well find ourselves in a situation where TRMC is at capacity and other real emergencies like Heart attacks, strokes, and trauma would all have to be transferred to other facilities, who by the way, are in the same situation as us. Not the way emergency medicine should be handled.

As if this crisis wasn't enough by itself, the Healthcare industry is facing critical shortages in many areas. Healthcare workers have left the field after fighting the Covid-19 battle daily for the last 18 months. Staffing continues to be a hot topic across the state, the region, and the country. Healthcare workers are tired, and many have opted for other lines of employment. As you can see, all these numbers are going the wrong way. But, there was some good news this week in our state. Our state vaccination rate rose by 42% this past week when compared to the previous week. Vaccinations are still available at Troy Regional, currently on Friday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with no appointment needed, and we certainly encourage those who aren't vaccinated to strongly consider getting one. We can do this Alabama! We MUST do this Alabama. Please get you vaccine and continue to be safe.

Rick E. Smith, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
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