



December 21, 2020

Mountain Health Center community,

As we enter a challenging but hopeful winter, I want to provide some information and updates about how we are working to take care of our patients and community. We recognize the immense impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on personal health, wellbeing, and financial security. It is our responsibility to work hard to address this impact.

With the initial doses of Covid-19 vaccine being administered across the state, we are building our internal vaccination capacity and system. There are many unknowns about how the state will implement a vaccination program, but we anticipate playing a significant role for our patients. We will be reaching out to our patients proactively based on age and other risk factors as vaccine doses become available. **There is no need for you to call Mountain Health Center to request a vaccine.** We expect it will take a number of months before vaccine is available to all patients. Based on current data demonstrating excellent safety and effectiveness, we recommend Covid-19 vaccination to nearly all of our patients. You can help in this effort by solidifying your decision to be vaccinated and spreading awareness that a well-executed vaccination effort is truly the best way to end this pandemic.

To keep our patients safe and comfortable, we continue to offer visits by video or telephone. For patients with fever, respiratory symptoms, or other concerns, we have a separate indoor “respiratory clinic” where we can provide care utilizing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Please call us if you are feeling unwell so that we can figure out if you need evaluation and/or testing for Covid-19.

The data on increasing rates of mental health problems and substance use are truly alarming. We are fortunate to have robust mental health resources and are the largest provider of addiction treatment services in Addison County. If you or a loved one are struggling with anxiety, depression, or substance use, please reach out.

We are fortunate to have a social worker and other caring staff who can help you and your family with resource needs and help access local services. During this pandemic, our social worker has been busy with projects including stocking free, local, healthy food in our health center and personally contacting all of our elderly patients for a check-in.

Please continue to stay safe, stay connected, wear a mask, and follow health guidelines.

With gratitude,
Brian Bates MD