



BOONE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY
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29 November 2020

The Honorable Michael L. Parson:

Thank you for your leadership during this pandemic year. As leaders of the county medical societies in Missouri's four major metropolitan areas, we are concerned that our local hospitals are now under enormous strain. Shortages of staffed ICU beds and ventilators has led to hospitals being unable to accept new patients, causing delays in necessary treatment.

This is concerning, as the public appears unaware that our ICUs are filling up so early in our flu season. We simply do not have the hospital resources and capacity to handle another bad flu season this year. If things do not start improving, patients requiring ICU care may need to be transferred to distant hospitals. We do not want to be put in the position of delaying time-sensitive care, because we do not have the staff or resources available to treat our patients properly during a pandemic and flu season.

As you know, many of our hospitals are becoming logjammed with recovered COVID-19 patients not being accepted back into long-term care facilities or rural hospitals. Given the evidence that patients can have a positive COVID-19 test for 3 months or more after infection, we recommend patients not re-test for COVID-19 for the first 90 days after a positive COVID-19 test or symptom onset. A number of long-term care facilities and rural hospitals have declined to receive hospitalized COVID-19 patients that have recovered and are out of isolation, restricting available beds when they are needed most.

In an effort to address the increased shortages seen state-wide, we respectfully request that you:

- Work with interested parties to help hospitalized COVID-positive patients, who are out of isolation, get transferred back out of those hospitals to make space for those who need acute care;
- Increase efforts to urge all citizens of this state to get the influenza vaccination, to protect our most vulnerable patients;
- Reappropriate funds, from any county declining to spend its issued CARES Act funding, to support our state and local public health departments; and
- Increase efforts to encourage all citizens of this state to wear masks when in public during this year's flu season, and consider implementing a state-wide mask mandate.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan E Hillard, MD,
BCMS President