



UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER
OF EL PASO

THE PULSE

NEWS & UPDATES
FROM UMC

Dec. 22, 2020



'Light At The End Of The Tunnel' UMC COVID-19 Vaccinations On



Dr. Alejandro Rios-Tovar Receives His Vaccine Friday Morning

University Medical Center of El Paso and other hospitals throughout our community have been allocated certain quantities of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to cover their workforce. You can [click here](#) for a list of who received Week 1 allocations. Per CDC guidance, the first group to be vaccinated were those in Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF's) and health care personnel. Health care personnel is inclusive of all administrative, housekeeping, food service, engineering, and others that work for the hospital.

Our state/federal partners have indicated that vaccine rollout needed to be quick and orderly to ensure vaccine distribution continued to flow properly. When in receipt of our initial shipment, we began vaccinating our health care personnel who have direct contact with COVID-19 patients. We also extended use of the initial allotment to EMS providers (as designated by El Paso Fire Department), providers at El Paso Children's Hospital, Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso providers who work in our facility, and the El Paso County Medical Examiners Office.

We anticipate having our health care workforce vaccinated by Tuesday. Once that is done, we are able to continue administering the vaccine per guidance provided by our federal/state partners. The next phase is as follows:

- Persons over 75 years and older and frontline essential workers. Frontline essential workers includes first responders (firefighters and police), education, food & agriculture, manufacturing, corrections workers, U.S. postal service workers, public transit workers, and grocery store workers.
Once that phase is complete, the next group to follow are:
- Persons 65-74, persons 16-64 with high risk medical conditions and other essential workers (other essential workers are classified as transportation and logistics, food services, construction, finance, IT & communications, energy, media, legal, engineers, and water/wastewater personnel.

The rollout then continues to other groups as the vaccine is made available.

UMC Partner El Paso Health Donates 2,500 Masks

The following letter was sent on behalf of Frank Dominguez, President and CEO of El Paso Health to UMC's President and CEO Jacob Cintron.

Let me congratulate you on being the first in El Paso to receive and administer the COVID-19 vaccine. UMC Associates, including frontline doctors, nurses, techs, and others have risked their health over the past nine months, and I am sure the arrival of the vaccine is a happy occasion for the entire hospital.

There is no doubt that this has been one of the (if not *the*) most difficult years for our El Paso County Hospital District. Yet, we have come through the most difficult parts of it and have demonstrated to El Pasoans that their District works well and is of substantial value to this community.

I believe the events of this year have made us stronger. This reflects our unity as a District, with a mission to provide the best possible care to the ones we serve. I also believe the El Paso County Hospital District has a bigger, more positive image in our region, and that goes back to leadership. I



thank you for what you have done, and continue to do, to make all of us more relevant and valuable in the eyes of El Pasoans.

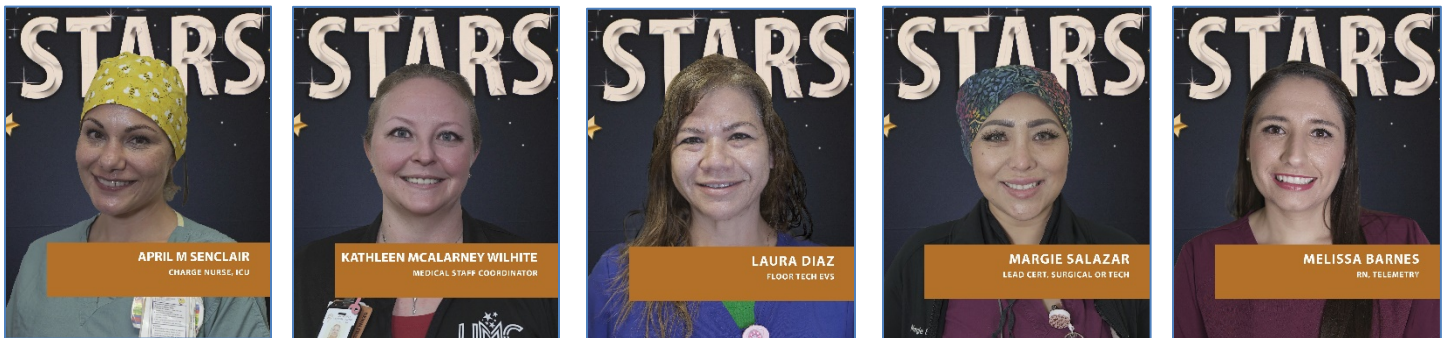
It is in this spirit that El Paso Health is proud to donate to UMC 2,500 masks for hospital employees. It is our hope that everyone on your staff receives a mask bearing the UMC logo, and that they wear these proudly as part of the UMC team.

From all of us at El Paso Health, we want to extend our thanks to you and UMC and hope that 2021 is a great year for all of us.

UMC Announces 2020 4th Quarter STARS Award Winners

The winners of UMC’s 4th Quarter STARS were recognized in different fashion as surprise visits took place at their respective departments. Each quarter, UMC announces the names of five Associates who were nominated by their peers or other Associates for special recognition for their performance excellence and dedication.

STARS = Service, Teamwork, Accountability, Respect, and Safety



In order from left to right, from our Intensive Care Unit, April Senclair; from our Medical Staff Office, Kathleen McLarney-Wilhite; from our Environmental Services Department, Laura Diaz; from our Ambulatory Surgery Unit, Margie Salazar; and from our Telemetry Department, Melissa Barnes. Every winner was nominated for their service and putting our patients, hospital, and community before themselves. Congratulations to our 4th Quarter STARS Award recipients!

‘We Will Defeat COVID-19 Household By Household, Family By Family’ – *By El Paso County Judge Ricardo Samaniego*

This article is reproduced from its original published form in the Dec. 22, Dallas Morning News

Last week brought a sense of relief about the COVID-19 pandemic after nine long months of trying to remain hopeful during what has been an extremely challenging year for us all. We can finally see a light

at the end of the tunnel as we witnessed many of our front-line heroes receive their first dose of a miracle vaccine that will surely have a profound impact throughout the world.

However, it is tremendously important to emphasize that the COVID-19 vaccine must be treated as one piece of the puzzle to defeat this virus once and for all. We must not let our guard down not even for one brief moment until we can finally declare victory over this invisible enemy.



The Martinez Family Gathers For A Picture Remembering The Loss Of Their Grandmother

This virus has not respected or discriminated against anyone in its path. This virus crosses our artificial borders without a passport and taunts us by appearing weak and defeated, only to raise its ugly head once more. The coronavirus will only be defeated when each family makes a clear and substantial commitment to eradicate it within their own homes.

Each family has someone who is always the first to take the lead in any crisis, whether it be a mother or an uncle. That person can rally the immediate and

extended family toward a coronavirus-free household. One virus-free family at a time will create a ripple effect and eventually create a tsunami against the coronavirus. At that point, the virus will be as defenseless as we have felt during these past nine months. We won't need outside enforcement because each family will make their family members accountable. I won't need to issue orders, like curfews, because each family will monitor their family's actions; especially those of our young adults.

Ultimately, respect and loyalty to family leadership will create a consciousness toward the family's well-being. As we anxiously await each family's turn to receive the vaccine, we will need to take extreme precaution to avoid further spread of the coronavirus. If our community sees an increase in the spread while at the same time the vaccine distribution process is taking place, this will only add to our devastation.

We must all take to heart that the distribution process will be at a snail's pace due to the stringent cooling protocols that are required for the vaccine. If you recall, due to communication, resources and logistical issues, it took several months to truly establish our groove with respect to testing. Although we have more experience in this area, the first vaccine has much more sensitive elements that need to be considered. For example, when the vaccine is administered, you will be required to wait 15 to 20 minutes near the vicinity of a health professional to assess any adverse reactions.

Medical professionals are extremely optimistic about the success of the vaccine; therefore, it will be vital that our community wholeheartedly trusts not only the process, but the effectiveness of the vaccine. Hesitation to take the vaccine, especially by our most vulnerable, will be another huge challenge for carrying out the distribution. It is my opinion that missing any window of opportunity for any of the categories will create a huge backlog.

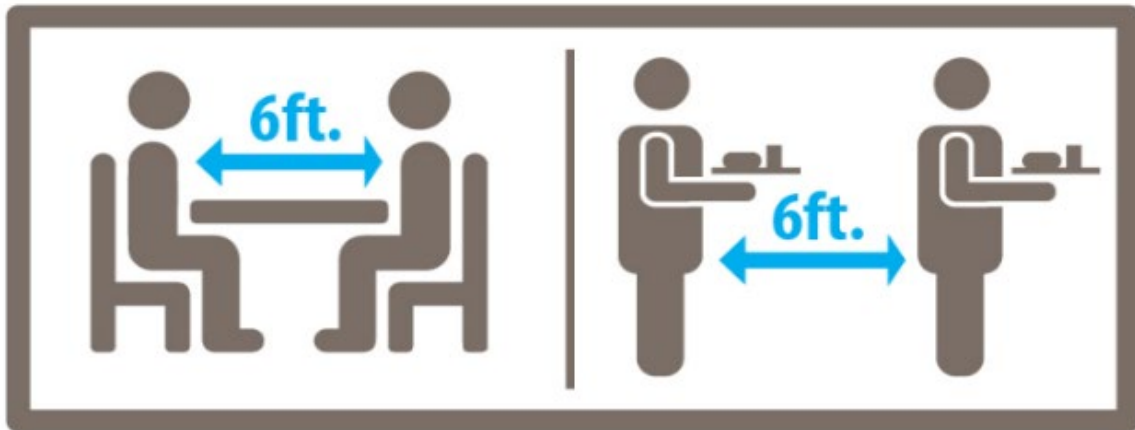
I will be counting on our El Paso state delegation, Sen.-elect César Blanco, Rep. Veronica Escobar and other trusted elected officials to reach their individual audiences to validate their confidence about this miraculous and timely vaccine.

One additional resource that has not been utilized to its full potential is antibody therapy for COVID-19 response. As I toured the infusion center in El Paso managed by Caliburn and the Texas Division of Emergency Management, I met with many medical professionals who are ready to take in additional patients in order to prevent further hospitalizations. Antibody therapy could be a vital resource to those who are in the early stages of showing symptoms and could ultimately help to prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed. If you know someone who begins to show symptoms, in addition to getting tested, please ask your doctor or provider about taking advantage of this service.

In the meantime, I wholeheartedly encourage something that I can't mandate, and that's an abundance of caution and prudence. My best advice is that we move forward as if there were no vaccine in sight, because our best layers of protection are to stay home whenever possible, get your flu shot and, most important, dedicate time and resources toward your health.

In an estimated 90% of COVID-19-related deaths in our community, the victims had underlying health issues. So as you can see, these three elements (prudence, flu shot and a healthy lifestyle) will allow the vaccine to be part of the puzzle and truly help us win this war. Let us unite and defeat this insidious virus once and for all.

REMINDER TO ALL:



When dining or standing in line at either the UMC Cafeteria or Bistro, you must observe all social distancing requirements.

Do not sit close together.

Do not move furniture to accommodate each other.

Your actions affect the actions of others.

These requirements apply to breakroom dining as well.
Please set the example by doing what's right for everyone.

