

HEALTH MATTERS



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First Quarter 2021

PrimaryOne Health's newsworthy information

COVID-19: Our Challenges, Opportunities & Partnerships to Serve Our Communities

By Charleta B. Tavares, CEO

2020, has finally come to an end. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has not been contained yet in the 1st Quarter of 2021 and we are still losing too many residents in Ohio, the U. S. and the world. PrimaryOne Health has been a leader in providing testing, treatment and health services in spite of the reduced staff, locations, and challenges in acquiring personal protective equipment (PPE) in the early stages of the pandemic. Our Board and staff have stepped up, in and challenged the team to develop new models of care. We reduced the number of facilities by closing smaller sites to ensure safe socially distanced staff, patients and visitors and due to staff taking FMLA to stay home with loved ones with COVID-19, to provide care for their children without childcare or providing home schooling due to online education. We pivoted and initiated telehealth services not previously allowed by the state of Ohio or the Federal government unless the patient and the practitioner were physically located in one of our health center sites – defeating the purpose and making it unfeasible.

While these challenges were daunting, the PrimaryOne Health Board and Leadership Team quickly developed a Contingency Plan (2020) to provide continuity of services, maintaining all staff positions and the sustainability of the organization. The plan was built on the premise that “we are all one, one for all and all for one.” We decided that each member of the PIH Team would take a 10% cut in

salary during the second quarter of 2020 and that we would review the financials in the third quarter to determine if we would be able to return the cut and make whole each member of the team. Due to the outstanding work of our Finance/ Accounting and Grants teams we were able to pay back the 10% to all staff and return them to their full salaries by the end of the second quarter 2020!



COVID-19 has tested our resiliency and that of our community partners. We have developed new partnerships and collaborations to test and now vaccinate our community residents. We have now tested more than 33,000 residents and provided vaccines to more than 4300 community members, patients and staff. Our COVID-19 vaccine and testing partnerships during the 1st Quarter of 2021 with schools, state agencies, Columbus

Public Health, Franklin County Public Health, and community and faith-based organizations. Our partnerships during this period have included St. Charles Preparatory School, Columbus Academy, Clinton Township Fire Department, Dunloe Elementary School, Licking Heights West Elementary School, Christ Memorial Missionary Baptist Church, Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, Mt. Hermon Missionary Baptist Church, Cities of Bexley, Reynoldsburg, and the Reynoldsburg United Methodist Church. We are continuing to work with our sister Community Health Centers/FQHCs and our Ohio Association of Community Health Centers to maximize our staff capacity to test, treat and vaccinate all of our residents who wish to have a test and/or vaccine.

PrimaryOne Health is currently providing the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines at four locations in Franklin County: 3433 Agler Road, 720 E. Broad Street, 2300 W. Broad Street and 1905 Parsons Avenue and one location in Pickaway County, 600 N. Pickaway Street, Suite 300 3rd Floor MO bldg., Circleville, OH 43113. Additional sites will open in the 2nd Quarter of 2021. For more information visit www.primaryonehealth.org or to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine, text the word “VACCINE” to 614.502.5329.

The Importance of Pediatric Visits 1 year after Lockdown

The past year has tested all of our resilience and resolve. This is true for parents who have been trying to juggle work and home schooling. Maintaining all of this and following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 guidelines (masks, social distancing, hand washing and avoiding large crowds) has been a tremendous challenge. We can all feel the effects of the Pandemic weighing heavy on us.

As communities open up, it is important that your child be scheduled for their well-child visits. In 2020, during the pandemic, PrimaryOne Health consolidated health centers to ensure uncompromised services across Franklin County, as well as provide COVID-19 testing. We are pleased to tell you that as of April 5, 2021, all of our health centers are fully operational (with the exception of our E. Livingston location) so we can once again provide quality health care to the underserved populations. We are following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) safety protocols and guidelines to ensure you and your family are safe.

Pediatric appointments are essential for many reasons, including:

- **Prevention.** Your child gets scheduled immunizations to prevent illnesses like measles and whooping



cough (pertussis) and 12 other vaccine preventable diseases.

- **Tracking growth & development.**

See how much your child has grown since their last visit, and talk with your doctor about your child's development. You can discuss your child's milestones, social behaviors and learning with their pediatrician.

- **Raising concerns.** Make a list of topics you want to talk about with your child's pediatrician such as development, behavior, sleep, eating or getting along with other family members. Bring your top three to five questions or concerns with you to talk with your pediatrician at the start of the visit.

- **Team approach.** Regular

visits create strong, trustworthy relationships among the pediatrician, parent and child. Well-child visits are recommended as a way for pediatricians and parents to create a team approach and serve the needs of each child. This approach helps develop optimal physical, mental and social health of the child.

Due to the pandemic, there is a concern with the drop in routine childhood vaccinations because families are staying at home. While families are following public health warnings about going out, this unfortunately resulted in many missed routine vaccinations. The CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend every child continue to receive routine vaccinations during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Importance of Oral Health

Dental health is important to your overall health and quality of life. A healthy mouth makes it easier to eat, speak, smile and interact with others.

Dental pain and emergency dental treatment caused by untreated dental problems take time away from our daily lives. An oral health study found

that children with poor oral health were almost 4 times more likely to miss school due to dental pain or infection and had a higher likelihood of poor school performance compared to children without dental pain. Another oral health study found that students averaged 2.2 missed days per school year for dental problems and the

parents averaged 2.5 missed days from work or school per year due to their children's dental problems. Each year in the United States, oral pain and unplanned emergency dental care in schoolchildren adds up to about 34 million hours of missed school. Dental pain in adults also leads to lost work time. Poor oral health and loss of teeth

in adults can lead to low self-esteem, poor nutrition and can contribute to other health issues.

Periodontitis (gum disease) is linked to several illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory disease. COVID-19 patients with periodontitis are almost nine times more likely to die of complications from the virus, according to study published in the Journal of Clinical Periodontology.

Here are some things that you can do to have a healthy mouth:

- Brush daily with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Change your toothbrush every 3-4 months. The bristles wear out and do not clean your teeth as well as they should after a few months.
- Avoid sugar sweeten beverages such as; Soda, juice, flavored milk and energy drinks contain sugars that feed bacteria that produce acid. This acid dissolves tooth enamel and can result in tooth decay. Drinking soda doubles the risk of cavities in children.
- Make water your first choice to drink. Water has no sugar or calories. It is good for your teeth and your waistline.
- See your dentist regularly. Put getting a dental check-up on your to-do list for 2021 as part of getting and staying healthy.



Many things have changed over the past year because of the COVID-19 virus. We have experienced shutdowns, restrictions and shortage of supplies as guidelines were developed and evolved. To help relieve early PPE shortages, dental offices closed.

Now, with safety protocols in place, PrimaryOne Health dental facilities are open and ready to see you and your family.

At PrimaryOne Health, we want you to be safe and feel safe when in the dental office. If you have been hesitant to return because of COVID-19 here are some of the things PrimaryOne Health is doing in the dental office for everyone's safety:

Disinfecting of high touch surfaces like door knobs & light switches

- Use of HEPA filtration/UV light to clean the air
- Increased ventilation
- Daily monitoring of staff members' temperature
- Health screening and temperature checks of everyone entering the dental clinic
- Access to COVID-19 vaccine for all dental staff members

Make your dental appointment today by calling 614-645-5500.

Re-Opening of PrimaryOne Health's Locations

The negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be finally loosening their grip on our community, helping to create a more reassuring outlook for our dedicated healthcare workers at PrimaryOne Health. When the pandemic first started taking shape back in March of 2020, PrimaryOne Health leadership team made the difficult, but necessary decision to temporarily close some of our health centers. Closing several identified health centers allowed us to consolidate resources, offer Families First Coronavirus Response

Act (FFCRA) leave to staff, and continue to provide quality care to our patients. Like many other healthcare organizations worldwide, we had to change the way we conducted business. PrimaryOne Health quickly pivoted to a virtual world. We used telehealth technology to connect with our patients. We grew our virtual patient population all while keeping both staff and patients safe.

The nimbleness and adaptability of our team allowed PrimaryOne Health to retain all staff, reduce costs, and continue to provide safe, quality, and

accessible healthcare to all. Protecting and keeping our patients and staff safe have always and will always be our top priority.

This spring, we have re-opened our 3781 South High Street location and have successfully transitioned our practitioners, staff and patients back to their original locations. As we became more comfortable in our new normal; and as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines allowed, decisions were made to reopen the COVID impacted health centers at South High, 1791 Alum

Creek Drive, Suite 100 (Maryhaven Campus) and 1500 East 17th Avenue. A comprehensive multifunctional team was created to plan and execute the reopening of the locations. The team consisted of Clinical, Operations, Finance, IT, Procurement, Billing, Human Resources, Health Center Managers, and Marketing and Facilities. A detailed plan was created and tasks assigned to ensure that the sites were operational on the re-opening date. While this list is extensive items included staffing plans, practitioner templates, cleaning and disinfecting, inventory and ordering of supplies (medical, PPE, office, IT), equipment testing, installing current safety measures (social distancing stickers, Plexiglas), and re-establishing suspended services. We look forward to welcoming our families and patients back to our health centers to continue to provide quality care.



COVID-19 Vaccine Program

In late December 2020, PrimaryOne Health began a COVID-19 vaccine program. The COVID-19 Vaccine Project Team consists of a 15-member interdepartmental task force committed to efficient and equitable distribution of vaccines to employees, patients, and community members.

Early on, during Phase 1A, the majority of PrimaryOne Health employees received at least one COVID-19 dose through PrimaryOne Health or one of our partners (Mount Carmel or Columbus Public Health).

During Phase 1B and beyond, PrimaryOne Health staff worked tirelessly to "get shots in arms" as quickly and safely as possible. We partnered with The Ohio National

Guard, The Ohio Department of Public Safety/Emergency Management Agency, Columbus Public Health, Ohio Departments of Health and Aging, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging and community and faith-based organizations all in an effort to ensure the vaccine reached underserved communities of color.

We currently offer Moderna COVID-19 vaccinations to the public at five of our Central Ohio locations. Weekday vaccine locations in Franklin County include 720 East Broad St., 3433 Agler Rd., 2300 West Broad St., and 1905 Parsons Ave. We have an additional location in Circleville, OH at 600 N. Pickaway St., Ste. 300, (3rd Floor, MO Building).

Specific details, including days and times at our 6 dedicated locations are available at www.primaryonehealth.org, with walk-in appointments available.

All vaccine recipients receive a PrimaryOne Health sticker that reads "I got my COVID-19 Vaccine." As of March 27, 2021 we have administered more than 8,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

As the vaccine becomes more widely available, PrimaryOne Health will continue to serve the community by providing a safe and effective vaccine to help stop the spread of COVID-19.



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Mission: To provide access to services that improve the health status of families, including people experiencing financial, social, or cultural barriers to health care.



This health center is a Health Center Program grantee under 42 U.S.C. 254b, and a deemed Public Health Service employee under 42 U.S.C. 233(g)-(n).

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