

COVID-19 Health System Updates

January 26, 2022, Wednesday

As Jane and I announced earlier today, the state is now making booster shots mandatory for all of our faculty, staff, trainees, and students. You need to get your booster by Monday, February 21, if you were eligible as of Friday, January 21, or by 30 days after you become eligible, whichever is later.

I want to put this into context: The data are now crystal clear. Booster shots protect you against serious consequences from COVID-19, including the Omicron variant.

Four new studies came out last week from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, showing that people who received booster shots were far less likely to experience [symptomatic COVID-19](#), hospitalization (two studies, [here](#) and [here](#)), and [death](#) from both the Omicron and Delta variants than people who were unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or fully vaccinated but not boosted.

So this rule, like the original vaccine mandate, is a step to help keep all of us safe—ourselves, each other, and our patients. It's part of our responsibility as caregivers and medical professionals. I really hope each of you will look at it that way.

If you've reported your booster to Employee Health Services (EHS) already, you're all set. Otherwise, please get your shot by the deadline and [report it to EHS](#). **You need to report it even if you got your shot at Mount Sinai.** And if you work with staff who don't use email, please help us get the word out by printing out and posting the attached flyers in English and Spanish.

As of this morning, we had 566 inpatients with COVID-19 across the system, 76 of whom were in critical care. The New York State seven-day average test positivity rates as of yesterday were 7.7 percent for New York City, 11.3 percent for Long Island, and 9.6 percent for the mid-Hudson region. These numbers are all now moving strongly in the right direction.

As this wave recedes, I want to take note of the many local businesses that have donated snacks and other items to our hospitals over the past few weeks. They have noticed and appreciated your continuing hard work for our communities. They are grateful, just as I am, for everything you have done and continue to do. There is more work ahead of us, but there is also renewed hope that things will be better in the very near future.

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