

Covid-19 Update #67

August 20, 2021

BallouLife Communities once again remains Covid-19 free. We are now testing unvaccinated staff twice a week and the results from Tuesday are all negative. The lab will be picking up the ones from yesterday and today. Those results will more than likely show results on Sunday. We did have a bit of a scare with a positive Covid-19 contact, we did POC (rapid tests) on staff that were secondary contact and also the PCR tests, all of the rapid tests were negative. The PCR tests are pending. Starting next week we will continue with the twice weekly testing for unvaccinated staff and weekly testing for vaccinated staff per RIDOH guidelines. Unvaccinated residents will continue to be tested every two weeks and vaccinated residents at this point are not being tested.

The booster shot for Covid-19 at this time is for immunocompromised individuals. Eventually it will work its way into the nursing home population. We will need consent for the booster shot, awaiting state guidance for this. Once I receive the information it will be passed on. The state mandate for Covid-19 vaccines for healthcare facilities was officially released this week, nothing has changed. The only exemptions are for medical reasons and these are very specific. Following the state mandate, CMS has mandated that all nursing homes that receive federal money will require Covid-19 vaccinations or will lose funding. BallouLife Communities is 96 percent vaccinated for residents and 78 percent vaccinated for staff based on staff in the building this week.

Rhode Island continues to remain in a high transmission rate with 196.7 cases per 100,000 this week, last week this was 152.3 cases. This numbers climbs weekly as unfortunately all the other statistics. Vaccinations slowly crawl upwards: partially vaccinated are 737,687, last week 729,387; fully vaccinated 673,305, last week 667,009; and total doses given 1,362,814, previous week 1,349,051. New hospitalizations are 108, last week 68; total hospitalized 95 up from 80. Rhode Island has reported 165 staffed adult ICU beds, 112 are filled by non-covid patients and 19 are filled by Covid patients. Overall, 131 out of 165 beds are filled or 79 percent. We therefore, do have some ability to absorb an increase in Covid cases.

The good news is that we still remain under the 5 percent positivity recommendations, there are 9 states that remain in this category, we have moved into 4th position. We are currently 3.61 percent positive, last week we were 3.48 percent positive. Our surrounding states are as follows: Massachusetts 2.73 percent, no change from prior week; New York 3.15 percent, last week 3.05 percent; Vermont 3.24 percent, last week 2.91 percent; Maine 4.3 percent, last week 2.35 percent; Connecticut 4.19 percent, last week 4.19 percent; and lastly New Hampshire 7.08 percent, last week 5.18 percent.

The county numbers are as follows: Providence County (Woonsocket) 4.6 percent positivity, last week 3.2 percent; Kent County 3.2 percent, last week 3.3 percent; Washington County

3.0 percent, last week 3.2 percent, Newport County 3.9 percent, no change from prior week; and lastly Bristol County 3.2 percent, last week 2.2 percent. As you can see Providence County of which Woonsocket is part of is close to going over the 5 percent positivity rate. The vaccination percentage for Providence County show 63%, all of the other counties are 70-72 percent.

The CDC Covid Tracker show that hospitalizations and deaths continue to rise especially in states with low vaccination rates. The current 7-day moving average of new cases is 133,056 an increase of 14 percent from last week of 116,470 cases. As of August 19, the 7-day average number of administered vaccines has increased 17.78 percent from the previous week. Partially vaccinated in the United States is 60.2 percent a 1.0 percent increase from the previous week and fully vaccinated is 51.1 percent a 0.7 percent increase. New hospitalizations 7-day average was 11,521 a 14.2 percent increase from 10,088 last week. They are currently highest in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oregon and Washington. As hospitals have reached capacity many hospitals are placing patients in out of state hospitals. The current 7-day moving average for new deaths is 641, previously 578, a 10.8 percent increase

Please be safe, as always, wash your hands, wear a mask, socially distance and get a vaccine.

Respectfully submitted,

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Infection Preventionist