

ROUNDUP

UI Health | UIC

Hospital & Clinics | December 2021

Safely Celebrating the Holidays at UI Health

Warm Greetings



Gratitude for Giving: Miracle on Taylor Street



Dozens of Amazing Gingerbread Houses





As we approach the New Year and celebrate our end-of-year holidays, we would like to express our gratitude for all we have collectively accomplished throughout 2021.

At this time last year, we were introducing our first vaccine doses to our frontline providers. Throughout this year, we have been leaders in COVID-19 vaccination for our neighbors and communities throughout Chicago, especially with our mass vaccine site at Credit Union 1 Arena on the UIC campus.

Your commitment to our communities and patients is underscored by other recent projects we've recently highlighted — including the Pediatric Partnership for Care with Cook County Health, and the new 55th & Pulaski Collaborative Health clinic. Along with our progress on the Outpatient Surgery Center & Specialty Clinics building, we have made foundational work on more fully living our mission in 2022.

At all levels of our organization, you continued to work longer and harder hours in new and unforeseen environments. Your commitment to caring for our patients, supporting your colleagues, and carrying out our mission have guided us through another challenging year. Thank you!

It has been a long year, but this season does bring new optimism, which we all should embrace. Please stay safe as you celebrate the year-end holidays with your families and loved ones. We have made tremendous progress this year — together — and we all should proudly carry this progress into the New Year.

Gratitude for Your Giving: Miracle on Taylor Street

Thank you to all who donated to our annual Miracle on Taylor Street Holiday gift drive! Though our annual employee holiday gift drive was virtual again this year, we still were able to make a difference in the lives of the homeless; women and children in shelters; and the less fortunate served by the Miracle on Taylor Street partner organizations we've supported for years.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of our staff who helped make a Miracle on Taylor Street come true for the less fortunate this year. Together, UI Health employees raised \$3,635.

[\(Holiday Season – continued next page\)](#)

Holiday Season at UI Health (continued)

Virtual Holiday Fun



Thank you for engaging with our annual Holiday Fun activities, which again were virtual this year. The candy-guessing contests remain open through Dec. 19 — check your email for the QR code to participate. We also held a Gingerbread House Contest. Teams are showing off their best holiday spirit — the gingerbread houses voted in the top three will be announced Dec. 21. Visit the intranet to cast your vote!

Stay Safe During Your Celebrations

As we near our end-of-the-year break, we want to remind you to please celebrate smart — at home and at work. We all are responsible for safe spaces and behavior at UI Health. We continue to see dramatic increases of COVID-19, and the highest risk of transmission is eating and drinking with others. It's imperative that we celebrate smart.

- Carefully evaluate any holiday gatherings.
- It is strongly advised that those that are vulnerable or at risk for severe complications consider not gathering with others outside their household. If you do, it should only be with those that have limited interactions outside their household.
- Consider getting the COVID-19 booster if you haven't already. All adults ages 18 and older can get a booster.

Remember, if you are traveling for the holidays:

All staff who also travel should reference our Post-Travel Guidance Grids for guidelines on testing, quarantines, and masking/distancing after travel. The travel grids can be found on the intranet: [COVID-19 Resources > FAQs for COVID-19 > Travel](#)

As of Dec. 1, IDPH requires all international travelers to test on day 3-7, and quarantine for 7 days after return regardless of test results and vaccination status. We will continue to follow and update changes to travel requirements.



Don't' Let Your Guard Down! Happy Holidays! ■



MIKE'S CORNER

Updates on Hospital & Clinics Leadership Structure

Our healthcare delivery system – including the University of Illinois Hospital & Clinics – is facing several issues that are prompting a need to make changes in our organization's executive leadership structure.

There are several aspects driving the need and urgency for this reorganization.

We are Growing We are experiencing significant growth fueled by added patient volumes and acuities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-related treatment delays. The Mercy Hospital closure also has impacted our capacity issues.

We are Expanding Next year we will open the Outpatient Surgery Center & Specialty Clinics. This new patient-care facility, coupled with our upcoming 55th & Pulaski Collaborative Health clinic, significantly expands the scope of UI Health.

We Need Focus & Precision at the Highest Levels Our strategic plan emphasizes clinical service line management and initiatives that require certain executive focus to achieve. Accomplishing this plan will require a focused and expanded executive team.

We Must Strategically Collaborate To ensure the collaboration and synergies between the Hospital & Clinics and the College of Medicine are the most strategic and effective, we must integrate more medical professionals into the Hospital's executive structure.

We Need to Navigate Today's Workforce Challenges Talent recruitment and retention is becoming increasingly difficult as a result of cultural and attitudinal shifts on work environments, and COVID-driven retirements and workforce instability.

To Better Serve Our Communities, We Must Better Represent Our Communities

Since the social upheaval of the summer of 2020, UI Health has sharpened its focus on more keenly addressing the underlying needs of the communities it serves. This specifically includes reflecting the diversities present throughout the workforce of UI Health. There is no place more important for this diversity balance to occur than in our executive leadership and its organizational structure. We must take expeditious actions to make our executive leadership more diverse and inclusive, and promote leaders of color.

We Must Broaden Leadership to Meet Increasing Demands We know our Chief Operating Officer, David Loffing, is retiring at the end of the calendar year, and we have other leaders nearing retirement. With my over 44 years in healthcare, these changes need to be realistically conscious of the nearing of my career conclusion, as well. These realities require broadening the level of executives to cover the increasing demands we are experiencing now, so succession activities take place with as little disruption as possible.

In the very immediate future, the actions we are taking in changing the executive leadership structure will be shared. As you see these changes, please remember that ensuring continued alignment and growing collaboration throughout our healthcare delivery system is crucial to the long-term success of UI Health. We look forward to putting in place the leaders and strategies that will help us achieve these goals. ■

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

David Loffing Retirement

As we announced in April of this year, Chief Operating Officer David Loffing will be retiring from the University of Illinois Hospital & Clinics at the end of the calendar year.

During his 26 years of service with UI Health, David's dedication to guiding the health system in achieving its strategic vision was critical to numerous successes here and served as an inspiration to the scores of staff who worked with him.

A vital member of our administrative leadership, David has served in various capacities during his tenure at UI Health.

He began his career here in 1995 as the director of Clinical Engineering & Materials Management. He later served as an associate hospital director and senior associate hospital director before becoming Chief Operating Officer in 2009.

David began his career as a clinical engineer, working with artificial hearts, technology management, and various healthcare construction projects at the University Medical Center in Tucson, Arizona. His education background includes a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and a Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering from The Ohio State University.

David's accomplishments at UI Health have been numerous and impactful, culminating in leading the development of the new Outpatient Surgery & Specialty Care building, which will open next year.

David's retirement will allow him to pursue personal goals and spend more time with his family, especially those who reside in Washington state.

All of us at UI Health are grateful for David's leadership and dedication during his decades of service to our hospital, staff, and

patients, and we are fortunate to have had his continued guidance the past two years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congratulations, David, and best of luck!



David's Reflections on UI Health

What Kept Him at UI Health for 20+ Years First of all, I have been extremely fortunate that UI Health has afforded me the opportunity to take on new challenges, learn new skills, and advance my career right here.

Secondly, there is a real sense of pride working for UI Health. We are a mission-driven organization dedicated to providing access to care, education, and economic opportunity to all — but especially to those communities that are most in need.

Proudest Accomplishment Although I am bookending my career at UI Health with significant construction projects — I worked on the equipment planning and opening of the Outpatient Care Center and am currently wrapping up the Outpatient Surgery Center & Specialty Clinics — I see my legacy as being a mentor to the health administration fellows and early careerists over the past two decades. It has truly been a pleasure.

Favorite Annual Activity Wearing my Grinch tie and socks.

Why He's Optimistic About UI Health's Future I see UI Health evolving from a brand to an entity. In recent years, we have invested in creating an environment of collaborative leadership and strategic planning amongst the Hospital & UIC Physicians Group. As we execute on this plan, UI Health will achieve the quality, health outcomes, and name recognition it deserves.

Retirement Plans I have been told that I need a hobby. So, I plan on trying golf. Otherwise, the focus will be on travel and corrupting my grandsons, Sam and Henry. ■

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

COVID-19: Stay Safe This Winter

As we continue in the holiday season and see a rise in COVID-19 cases, it is important to remember and continue to practice the COVID-19 prevention and mitigation behaviors we've developed over the past several months. It's imperative that we celebrate smart this holiday season. We all are responsible for safe spaces and behavior at UI Health.

Cold Symptoms = Covid-19 Symptoms

Do not come to work with any symptoms of a cold or COVID-19. If you feel sick or have symptoms, make sure you get evaluated and tested for COVID-19 and other respiratory infections to prevent spread to patients, visitors and co-workers. Your compliance and cooperation to this request is paramount to everyone's safety.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, inform your manager or director, remove yourself from work, complete the Immuware COVID intake form, and you will be referred to the Employee Testing Center (ETC) for testing.

Wear a Mask at All Times

All Hospital & Clinics staff should be diligent about mask wearing at all times and eye protection for clinical encounters. All staff throughout the hospital must wear a mask at all times. If you must unmask to drink or eat, please leave the patient care area and keep a distance of at least 6 feet from others. Keep curtains pulled in multi-patient rooms and reinforce mask wearing of patients. Masking, as it always has, helps prevent us from contracting and transmitting COVID-19.

COVID-19 Boosters

Get your COVID-19 booster as soon as possible. The booster is recommended for individuals who are fully vaccinated and will help extend protection from immunization. COVID-19 boosters are approved for all adults age 18+, six months after receiving their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Those age 16-17 who received the Pfizer vaccine also can get a booster six months after their second dose. Adults 18+ who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine can receive a booster two months after receiving their vaccine. COVID-19 boosters are available for staff, patients, and community members at UI Health vaccine locations across Chicago.

The vaccines currently available are effective against the Delta variant and may have some protection against the new Omicron variant. The Delta variant is still the predominant strain in the U.S., so it is important to get vaccinated if you have not and to get your booster when it is indicated.

To schedule an appointment for a first dose or a booster, visit [Vaccine.UIHealth.Care](https://vaccine.uihealth.care) or call **833.53.MYVAX**.

Travel Safety

All staff who travel out of state or internationally should reference our Post-Travel Guidance Grids for guidelines on testing, quarantines, and masking/distancing after travel.



(COVID Safety - continued next page)

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

COVID Safety (continued)

The travel grids can be found on the intranet: COVID-19 Resources > FAQs for COVID-19 > Travel

Mandatory Saliva Testing Requirements

University Health Service (UHS) requires mandatory twice-weekly COVID-19 saliva testing for staff who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated (including staff with a COVID-19 Vaccine Exemption) and employees who are indicated in an exposure or cluster evaluation in a specific unit. If you are required for mandatory saliva testing, UHS will contact you directly via email.



Important Reminders for Mandatory Saliva Testing

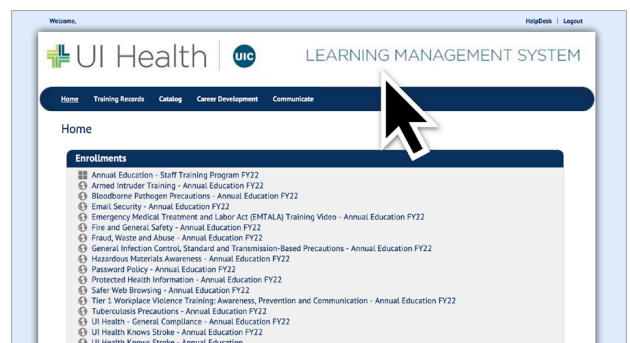
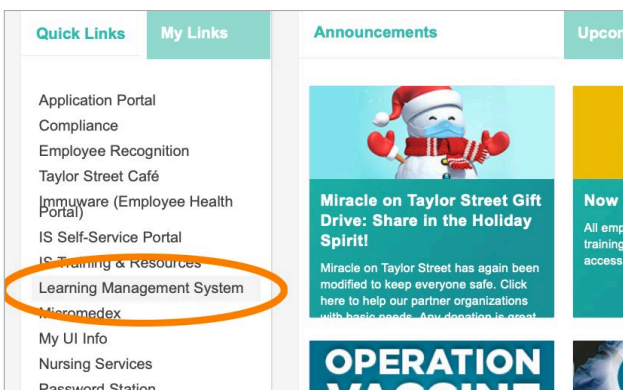
- Reference the Saliva Testing Program grid on the Intranet for directions on how to complete mandatory saliva testing using your unit's Saliva Test Kit.
- Watch for an exposure email sent ONLY to your UIC email.
- Respond immediately to Contact Tracing telephone calls and voicemails.
- Questions regarding the COVID-19 exposure should be directed to UHS Contact Tracing: **312.996.6250** or uhscontacttracing@uic.edu

Thank you for your support, cooperation, and commitment to creating the safest environment possible for all patients and all staff at UI Health. ■

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

LMS Training Deadline

Don't forget! Mandatory LMS training is due Jan. 31. Access your training on the intranet under "QuickLinks." ■



ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Safety Resources

Important Holiday and Campus Safety Reminders



When shopping at stores:

- Be aware of your surroundings when returning to your vehicle.
- If shopping late in the day or after dark, park in a well-lit area.
- Shop in pairs or with a group of people.
- Never put items in the trunk of your car and return to shopping.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Never store your purse in the trunk of the vehicle.
- Never keep valuables visible.

While driving during the holidays:

- If a vehicle bumps you from behind, never get out with keys still in the ignition.
- Always keep your doors locked.
- Pay attention to your surroundings while in traffic.
- Never engage in road rage.

Reminders about on-campus safety:

Download the UIC Safe App! The UIC Safe App is a FREE personal security tool that provides UI Health employees, medical staff, faculty, and students with added safety on the East and West campuses.

[Click here to download the app](#)

[Click here to view the UIC Safe virtual friend walk demo](#)

You may request an escort by a UI Health Security Officer available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling **312.996.8888**.



You can also contact “Safe Walks” — a free waking escort service provided by trained members of the Student Patrol for university students and employees — so no one has to travel alone at night. The service is available from 9 pm – 2:30 am Sunday–Wednesday and until 3 am Thursday–Saturday by calling **217.333.1216**.

If you are in immediate danger call:

- Off-campus call 9-1-1
- On-campus call 5-5555 (312.355-5555)
- Activate a nearby panic alarm
- Sign-up for UIC Notification System

Sign-up for today for UIC ALERT notifications. UIC Alert enables UIC officials to contact each member of the UIC community quickly in case of an urgent campus-wide emergency.

For additional resources, visit the “Campus Safety Resources” intranet tile. ■

/// PATIENT SAFETY

CORS: Co-Worker Observational Reporting Launches at UI Health

Professional communication, with our patients and our co-workers, is an important component of promoting a culture of safety in the workplace.

Healthcare team members, in particular, are well-positioned to observe disrespectful and unsafe conduct — behaviors that are documented in risk management and patient safety literature as causal in undermining team function — among their peers.

Just as our Patient Advocacy Reporting System (PARS) peer messenger system has resulted in decreased complaints and malpractice risk, so, too, is the goal of the Co-Worker Observational Reporting System (CORS). CORS documents reported unprofessional physician behavior from a co-worker and utilizes a core team of peer messenger physicians to intervene with a “cup of coffee” meeting at the time of a provider’s first report of unprofessional behavior.

Vanderbilt University Medical Center developed CORS following its experience sharing patient complaints with physicians through the PARS peer messenger system, which resulted in decreased complaints and malpractice risk. UI Health has been a partner with Vanderbilt’s Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy (CPPA) and the PARS program since 2008. We completed Phase I of our CORS implementation and activated physician reporting Oct. 16.

A core team of peer messenger physicians have committed to serving in the capacity of peer messengers and received training by Vanderbilt CPPA staff. Dr. Steve Pesanti, medical director of the Inpatient Psychiatry Unit, will serve as chair along with Rhonda Perna,

senior director of Risk Management & Patient Safety, for the Committee on Professionalism that will meet bimonthly to review our experience with CORS.

Many of our messengers have served in the PARS or Care for the Caregiver program and are experienced in sensitive interactions with medical professionals.

As with other CORS sites, reporting is through our electronic patient safety event reporting system.

Similar to PARS, CORS statistics over a three-year period show that only about 3% of medical professionals are associated with 44% of all behavioral reports. The CORS National Comparison Database demonstrates that 85–90% of medical professionals never receive a report. CORS is both a tool and a process. As with the PARS system, the CORS process utilizes a tiered pyramid approach when responding to reports of co-worker behavioral issues. Healthcare entities utilize their patient safety event report database to capture reports of unprofessional co-worker behavior.

These behavioral reports are simultaneously submitted to Vanderbilt’s CPPA, triggering a notice back to the healthcare entity to engage in a first-level cup of coffee exchange by an assigned peer messenger. The coffee meeting typically last about 10 minutes and is not an investigation of the report but rather a reflection of behavior that led to the report. A second behavioral report will similarly follow the same process. It is only when a medical professional moves up the pyramid that an action plan and further interventions are contemplated by the entity. Only 1.4% on average will move on to a potential pattern and receive an Awareness-level intervention. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Brave the Shave: St. Baldrick's 2022 Head-shaving Fundraiser Event

Our annual St. Baldrick's Head-shaving Event helps raise money to support children's cancer research and treatment.

Visit StBaldricks.UIHealth.Care to sign-up to be a shavee, volunteer, donate, or fundraise.

WHEN: Friday, Feb. 18, 8-10 am

WHERE: 1740 W. Taylor St., Conference Room 4312

Questions on how to donate, fundraise, or get involved? Contact:

Dee Foster: 312.413.8655, fosterdo@uic.edu; or **Dana Thornquist:** 312.413.0662, danatho@uic.edu

Please note we will be following the most up-to-date safety recommendations from the CDC and UI Health for the event. Shavee's will likely be assigned a specific time-slot to come so that social distancing is possible. Thank you for your flexibility. ■



OPERATIONS

Improving Clinic Signage in Patient Areas

The Marketing & Strategic Communications team is working with clinic directors to help improve patient experience and perception of clinic spaces by streamlining the postings in waiting and exam rooms. Reducing the amount of patient messages in these spaces helps to improve perceptions of cleanliness, professionalism, and conveys the most important messages to our patients.

Over the next few weeks, Marketing team members will be visiting every clinic to identify materials that are out of date and/or have the wrong branding.

The **Take It & Toss It** campaign supports our organizational goal to unite UI Health under a single brand.

Learn more about [UI Health Logo & Brand Guidelines on the Marketing Toolkit](#). ■