



To: All Sun Health Team Members
From: Joe La Rue, President, Sun Health
cc: Bhakti Gosalia, Vice President of Operations, Sun Health Communities
Tahlya Visintainer, Chief Operating Officer, Sun Health
Wendy Pardonche, SVP of HR & Organizational Development, Sun Health
Date: August 19, 2021
RE: White House Announcement re: COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate and Other Updates

Yesterday, President Joe Biden announced that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), under his administration's guidance, will require that all nursing home staff be vaccinated against COVID-19. The President took this measure to encourage more people to get the COVID-19 vaccine. More than 15,000 nursing homes nationwide receive funding from CMS. If organizations do not comply, they will no longer receive federal Medicare and Medicaid funding for healthcare services provided to those insured by Medicare.

A deadline for vaccination was not specifically addressed by President Biden. The President stated, "If you visit, live or work in a nursing home, you should not be at a high risk for contracting COVID from unvaccinated employees."

Last week, Sun Health announced, under direction from the board of directors, that we are requiring all team members be vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment. This means you must receive either your first dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine by **October 1, 2021** or qualify for an approved medical or religious exemption (employees receiving the two-dose vaccines must be fully vaccinated by November 1). Those who do not comply will be considered to have resigned their employment. Given that Sun Health is a Medicare provider, we are waiting to see if the CMS mandate impacts Sun Health's stated deadline.

We are proud of the fact that Sun Health was ahead of the curve with our mandate, knowing it is the right thing to do for our residents, our families, neighbors, and each other. The Arizona Department of Health Services reports nearly all cases of COVID-19 cases are among those unvaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control and Infection reports nearly all COVID-19 related deaths are among those who are unvaccinated as well.

Here are a couple of other reminders regarding COVID-19 and upcoming the flu vaccine:

- **Masks:** Staff, whether vaccinated or not, are required to wear a mask while onsite at any Sun Health location.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots:** As more details regarding COVID-19 booster shots are rolled out, Sun Health will schedule on-campus clinics for team members and residents. It is understood that you should get the same type of shot (Pfizer or Moderna) as you originally received.

- **Flu vaccines:** We are approaching the time of year for flu vaccines, which are also mandatory under Sun Health policy. There are recommendations to allow a certain amount of time between getting the flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine or booster. This information is evolving and under the guidance of our medical director, we will share information to help you plan appropriately. We will be announcing dates and times for Sun Health flu vaccine clinics soon.

Please reach out to your supervisor, campus leader or my office with any questions.

Thank you for being a valued member of our team, Joe