Dear Neighbors,

It’s that time of year when “no room in the inn” touches many of our hearts. Unfortunately for many in our region, it’s hitting too close to home.

People in need of emergency or specialty care are experiencing hospitals that are near capacity, where almost 80% of hospitalized and ICU patients are unvaccinated from COVID-19.

Students are facing the possibility of being sent home from school to quarantine.

Business owners need to balance creating safe environments while serving customers in this new environment.

Each of us is trying our best to cope with increased and prolonged stress and uncertainty in nearly every aspect of our lives due to the ongoing pandemic.

Amid sluggish vaccination rates, surging COVID-19 cases, worrisome variants and the onset of another pandemic winter, we need to embrace the holiday spirit and protect ourselves, our loved ones and our communities.

After nearly two years of cautious living, we all have the desire to return to “normal”. We hope we will find encouragement in the fact that we have the tools to push back against another surge and close the gap between today and when we can return to “normal” life with safety and confidence.

Join us in choosing some of the many ways to Be Safe this holiday season.

This is about people. Our friends, families, neighbors, colleagues and others who need our help.

Get a COVID-19 vaccine if you haven’t already.
- All Wisconsinites 5+ are eligible and vaccines are our best approach to ensure access to care, keep kids in schools and keep businesses open.
- More than 3 million Wisconsinites and 200 million Americans have been fully vaccinated, and the vast majority of COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths continue to be among the unvaccinated.
- Local health care providers and pharmacies are offering a variety of easy scheduling options for the vaccine, including walk-in.

Get a COVID-19 booster when you’re eligible.
- All Wisconsinites 16+ who have been fully vaccinated for more than 6 months, with the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine, are strongly encouraged to receive a COVID-19 booster.
- All Wisconsinites 18+ who have been fully vaccinated for more than 2 months with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are strongly encouraged to receive a booster.

Stop COVID-19’s ability to move through our communities.
- Vaccines are available for everyone age 5+ and everyone can Be Safe.
- We know face coverings, physical distancing, flu shots and limiting opportunities for illness of all kinds to spread makes a difference in fighting COVID-19.
- Communicate expectations in invitations ahead of time and enforce masking indoors when vaccine status of all attendees is unknown, to create the safest environment.

Will you help us Be Safe this holiday season and ensure there is room in the inn for those who need it?

Happy Holidays,

Imran A. Andrabi, MD, FAAFP
President and CEO
ThedaCare
Laurie Asher
District Administrator
Seymour Community School District
Becky Bartoszek
President and CEO
Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Judith M. Baseman
District Administrator
Appleton Area School District
Michael Bergmann, RN, MHA
Regional President
Fox Valley Hospitals
Ascension Wisconsin
Peg Burlington
Library Director
Waupaca Area Public Library
Tim Cody
President
Fox Valley Veterans Council
Bryan Davis
District Administrator
Oshkosh Area School District
Curt Detjen
President and CEO
Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region
Tracey Froiland, RN, MSN
FVHERC Coordinator
Fox Valley Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition
Peter Gianopoulos
President and CEO
United Way Fox Cities
Doug Gieryn
Director/Health Officer
Winnebago County Public Health
Kristine Hutter
Public Health Director/Health Officer
City of Menasha Health Department
Sonja Jensen
Interim Health Officer
City of Appleton Health Department
James M. Koteck
President and CEO
Menasha Corporation
Margaret “Peggy” Larson
District Administrator
Winneconne Community School District
Greg Lemke-Rochon
CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley
Dr. Mary Pfeiffer
District Administrator
Neenah Joint School District
Mark Rohloff
City Manager
City of Oshkosh
Nichole J Schweitzer
District Administrator
School District of Shiocton
Kristene Stacker, RN
CEO
Partnership Community Health Center, Inc.
Dr. Craig Syte
Optometrist
Griebenow Eyecare
Chris L. VanderHeyden
District Administrator
Menasha Joint School District
Natalie Vandeveeld, M.S., REHS
Public Health Officer/Manager
Outagamie County Public Health Division
Lee Vogel, MD
Executive Director
Mosaic Family Health
Chip Wood
Executive Director
Rebuilding Together Fox Valley

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