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Gov. Wolf Visits UPMC Pinnacle Community Osteopathic, Thanks Staff, Discusses Required Mask-wearing Benefits

Harrisburg, PA – As health care professionals work the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic and the commonwealth continues to emphasize the importance of mask-wearing and social distancing to protect all, Governor Tom Wolf today visited UPMC Pinnacle Community Osteopathic Hospital in Harrisburg to thank staff and stress why mask-wearing is a necessary requirement to fight the spread of COVID-19.

“The past four months have not been easy, but you all have done a tremendous job working on the front lines to save lives,” Gov. Wolf said. “On behalf of all Pennsylvanians, I thank you for the work you’ve done.”

The Wolf Administration’s measured approach to reopening was instrumental in keeping cases from escalating as the state reopens, and mask-wearing continues to be vital to keep Pennsylvanians safe. Last week, the governor reminded Pennsylvanians that [wearing a mask is mandatory inside businesses](#). Everyone, including workers and customers, must wear a mask unless they have a medical reason not to or are under the age of 2.

“Over the past few days, we have seen several other states experience alarming new case increases and a few have had to implement new restrictions on places where people gather,” Gov. Wolf said. “Right now, in Pennsylvania, we are monitoring a few hot spots and we are asking Pennsylvanians to use extreme caution when out in public.

“Every Pennsylvanian should be wearing a mask when in public. They should be wearing them when in crowded areas outside. They should be wearing them for the entire time they are inside a store and they should be wearing them when spending time with family or friends who do not live in their household.”

The [governor supported Allegheny County's](#) decision to prohibit on-premises alcohol consumption as he continues to stress the requirement to wear masks out of respect for all, including our health care workers.

“If you start to feel like it’s uncomfortable to have a mask on for the hour or so that you’re in a store, I want you to think of these men and women at UPMC Pinnacle who wear masks while on their feet for 12-hour shifts caring for patients,” Gov. Wolf said. “Wearing a mask is a sign of strength, and courage, and kindness to protect others.”

The governor was joined at today’s event by Department of Health Sec. Dr. Rachel Levine; Doug Neidich, chair, UPMC Pinnacle Board of Directors; Christian Caicedo, MD, president of UPMC Pinnacle Dauphin Region; and John Goldman, MD, infectious disease specialist and vice president, UPMC Pinnacle.

“We have learned that our communities are filled with heroes, including the ones who are here with us today,” Dr. Levine said. “And we have learned that this virus is not done with us yet. Across the country, states are seeing increases in cases, including here in Pennsylvania. It has been wonderful to be able to see each other and resume some of the activities that we love to do. But we still must be careful. COVID-19 still represents a danger to our communities and our health that we cannot take lightly.”

“We are grateful to Governor Wolf, Secretary Levine, and all our other attendees for visiting today to recognize our team members who are working hard to care for the patients and communities impacted by COVID-19,” said Philip Guarneschelli, president of UPMC Pinnacle.

“UPMC has introduced extensive, system-wide measures to protect our patients, staff, and communities. We encourage all members of the community to get the care they need, and not to delay in an emergency. This is critical so that you do not experience worsening symptoms or serious complications,” said Christian Caicedo, MD, president of UPMC Pinnacle Dauphin Region.

“We all have a responsibility to protect our most vulnerable, ill and compromised loved ones, even as we all eagerly return to a more normal life. The evidence supporting the effectiveness of masks grows every day. Studies point to their ability to slow the spread of the disease and actually reduce the number of deaths caused by COVID-19,” said John Goldman, MD, infectious disease specialist and vice president, UPMC Pinnacle.

The Wolf Administration’s guidance for business includes comprehensive [FAQs on mask-wearing](#).

Read more on Gov. Wolf’s Process to Reopen PA [here](#).

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