

Huddle Message for April 12, 2022

CE Messaging – ¡Ándale! ¿Qué Esperas? Campaign Update

We are pleased to share that the ¡Ándale! ¿Qué Esperas? campaign has partnered with **Grupo Chespirito** to create a video featuring the iconic characters of Chespirito's *El Chavo Animado* to ease the fears of parents and children, and encourage families to protect themselves by getting vaccinated. Check out the campaign website at andalequeesperas.com to view El Chavo videos and El Chavo meme generator.

¡Ándale! ¿Qué Esperas? Campaign materials are available for staff and patients, this includes t-shirts for your team. Please reach out to Leslie Hernandez, Civic Engagement Coordinator, at leshernandez@altamed.org to request campaign materials for your team. Material requests will be based on availability and the best will be done to accommodate all requests. Thank you for your continued support!

Top News Lines

Federal

- Inflation soared over the past year at its fastest pace in more than 40 years, impacting the costs for food, gasoline, housing and other necessities. The U.S Labor Department said Tuesday that its consumer price index jumped 8.5% in March from 12 months earlier — the biggest year-over-year increase since December 1981. Prices have been driven up due to bottlenecked supply chains, robust consumer demand and disruptions to global food and energy markets worsened by Russia's war against Ukraine.
- Last Thursday, Speakers Nancy Pelosi, Attorney General Merrick Garland, and a string of lawmakers, have all tested positive in recent days. In fact, experts are bracing for cases to increase in the coming weeks, given the more highly transmissible subvariant of omicron, BA.2, that is circulating widely. Since then, Speaker Pelosi has quarantined and tested negative. <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/3262959-string-of-covid-cases-hits-dc-as-nationwide-rise-looms/>
<https://thehill.com/news/house/3264279-pelosi-tests-negative-for-covid-set-to-exit-isolation/>
- Vice President Harris announced the White House proposal to lessen American's medical debt burden. One-in-three adults in the United States have medical debt. It is now the largest source of debt in collections—more than credit cards, utilities, and auto loans combined. Black and Hispanic households are more likely to hold medical debt than white households.
 - Specifically, the proposal would:
 - Hold medical providers and debt collectors accountable for harmful practices;
 - Reduce the role that medical debt plays in determining whether Americans can access credit – which will open up new opportunities for people with medical debt to buy a home or get a small business loan;

- Help over half a million of low-income American veterans get their medical debt forgiven; and,
- Inform consumers of their rights.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/11/politics/white-house-medical-debt-consumer-protection/index.html>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/11/fact-sheet-the-biden-administration-announces-new-actions-to-lessen-the-burden-of-medical-debt-and-increase-consumer-protection/>

- A federal appeals court last Thursday ruled to uphold the Biden administration's vaccine mandate for federal workers, ordering that a preliminary injunction issued against the requirement be eliminated. Following this ruling, the Biden Administration asked the federal appeals court to reinstate the public health policy on vaccinations. If approved, this move up the timeline for the panel's judgment to take effect, which is currently not set to occur until May 31.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/3262237-federal-appeals-court-upholds-biden-admin-vaccine-mandate-for-federal-workers/>

<https://thehill.com/regulation/3264420-biden-seeks-to-resume-federal-worker-vaccine-mandate/>

State/Local

- Effective Monday, the state Department of Public Health stopped issuing weekday updates on COVID data. It now will publish those numbers just two days a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays.
<https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2022/04/vaccine-bills-california/>
- Just weeks after the school mask mandate was lifted in California, Los Angeles County is seeing an increase in school coronavirus outbreaks. There were 14 school outbreaks reported in the county in the seven-day period ending April 5, including 12 at elementary schools and two at high schools, according to the LA County Department of Public Health.
<https://ktla.com/news/local-news/covid-outbreaks-increase-at-l-a-county-schools-after-mask-mandate-lifted/>
- Daily COVID-19 case numbers continue to climb upward, and while hospitalization numbers remain low, health officials said on Monday, April 11, that they fear an eventual increase in patient volumes if previous pandemic patterns hold. Over the past seven days, the county reported an average of 960 new cases per day, a 23% jump from the previous seven days. The increase in cases has been blamed on rising spread of the infectious BA.2 subvariant of the virus
https://www.dailynews.com/2022/04/11/daily-la-county-covid-cases-keep-inching-upward/?utm_campaign=CHL%3A%20Daily%20Edition&utm_medium=email&hsmi=209777374&hsenc=p2ANqtz-8Qer91P9Xi9f2Ye321Uk83-PZlyxgWrIKPfMO9HPstnt73mXNgbmVnjQrWhsvICgauYnkzoX5H5Z6ifOmoHTvJw3PQ&utm_content=209777374&utm_source=hs_email

Infection Prevention Update

LA County cases continues to rise slightly each week. Positivity rate has stayed the same at 1%. More people are likely testing due to symptoms or due to exposure or prior to exposure.

- Philadelphia is the first city to have reinstituted the mask mandate.

With this information, I would like to reinforce a couple items:

At AltaMed, we still have our mask mandate. We are held to a health care organization standard. We need to wear a surgical or higher level mask at all times. If eating or drinking, we may remove our mask, but maintain physical distancing in order to reduce crowding. Outdoors, there is more protection with increased airflow. If in a crowded setting outdoors, continue to wear your mask if closer than three feet. If needing to eat or drink outdoors, it is best to maintain at least three feet physical distancing.

Protecting yourself and loved ones in the community. Staying up to date with vaccines, including getting a booster if you are eligible helps to protect against infection and transmission of COVID-19. It is still possible to get a mild or asymptomatic infection when you are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines, but you are less likely to develop a severe illness or transmit COVID-19 to others.

Additionally, it is possible to get the BA2 variant even if you have had a prior Omicron or BA1 variant infection during December, January or February. We are three months out from the winter surge, so we are more vulnerable to get a reinfection at this point in time. The best thing to do is to get up to date with your vaccines. Get boosted, if booster eligible.

Should we get a 2nd booster? Must be four months from your first booster, then:

- Approved for people 18-49 with moderate to severe immune suppression.
- Also approved for people 50 and over
- Also approved for people 18 and over that have only gotten 2 shots of Janssen vaccine in the past.

What I recommend is that all people who have moderate to severe immune suppression, get your second booster. If you are 65 and older, get your second booster, and if you are 50-64 with chronic medical conditions that put you at increased risk of severe COVID-19, get your second booster.

Advise friends and family to get their booster if they fall into the above categories.

Another way we can protect ourselves is by testing. Make sure to have plenty of antigen tests at home in case you are going to be having a gathering or socializing with at-risk individuals or if you start to have symptoms. Continue to test yourself until you are symptom-free as the first few tests may be falsely negative, especially if you are up to date with your vaccines.

If you are feeling sick, make sure to contact Employee Health for testing. They have access to a more sensitive test called the ID-Now test, which can be performed by testing your nose or mouth. The mouth should be tested if your symptoms are more throat and not nasal congestion.

We are not going to have an HR update today. We hope you have a wonderful day!