



## COVID-19 Huddle Notes for October 12, 2021

### Government Relations

#### *¡ÁNDALE! ¿QUÉ ESPERAS? Statewide Day of Action*

Today, in honor of Dia de La Raza and Hispanic Heritage Month, AltaMed, along with our [¡ÁNDALE! ¿QUÉ ESPERAS?](#) coalition of community health clinics--in partnership with community allies across the State are having a statewide Day of Action encouraging Latinos across the state to get vaccinated.

Please help support our day of action by following us on social media to promote our statewide actions:

- [www.andalequeesperas.com](http://www.andalequeesperas.com)
- Hashtags: #AndaleQueEsperas
- Twitter: @AndaleQueEsperas
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/andalequeesperas>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/andalequeesperas/>
- TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@andalequeesperas>

You can also:

1. Join us from 11am PT - 12pm PT for a #AndaleQueEsperas Twitter storm.
2. Join us at 12:30pm PT on our @andalequeesperas Instagram for an IG Live with the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond for a discussion on the importance of ensuring that every eligible child is vaccinated.
3. Participate and amplify the conversation throughout the day using our social media tools with the #AndaleQueEsperas hashtag.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Cynthia Romo, our Civic Engagement Program Manager, at [cyromo@altamed.org](mailto:cyromo@altamed.org).

### Top News Lines

**Federal** – There is a lot happening on the federal level:

- First, regarding infrastructure. Negotiations continue in the House over the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation bill, which is part of the President’s Build Back Better Plan. Democrats still need to work out the details on the various programs they would like to be included in this bill which include childcare and climate change, working with the divide within the party between moderates and progressives.

- There is also the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill, where negotiations seem to have stalled a bit. Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Schumer have suggested October 31 as the new deadline to pass both the bipartisan bill and the Build Back Better Act
- As the Build Back Better Act may face cuts throughout the negotiation process and the infrastructure bill stalls, our team is still advocating to ensure the \$10 billion in infrastructure funding for community health centers and \$6.3 billion in health workforce funding stay the final budget reconciliation package. At this point, both of these items remain in the bill without opposition.
- On the debt ceiling, Senate leadership reached a deal to allow the debt ceiling to be raised through December 3<sup>rd</sup> to keep our government open. Specifically, the debt ceiling will be raised by \$480 billion. This move prevents a government shutdown and ensures our nation does not default on our debt, which would have caused an economic crisis. This bill still needs to pass in the House before it comes before the President for final signature.
- Our Government Affairs team continues to push for AltaMed priorities in these packages with our Congressional representatives as negotiations progress

## **Local**

- The Los Angeles City Council, in an 11 - 2 vote, approved a [vaccine mandate ordinance](#) for select businesses and events in the City of Los Angeles that will go into effect in early November. The City's ordinance expands on restrictions currently implemented by Los Angeles County's Health Officer Order, which would require proof of vaccination at indoor establishments where food or beverages are served, gyms and fitness venues, entertainment and recreation venues (including movie theaters and malls), and personal care establishments.

## **Infection Prevention Medical Director**

Flu season typically runs from October through March/April and our big drive is to get as many people as we can vaccinated through the month of October so that we can be protected when typically flu rears its ugly head in November, December, and January. We have been fortunate in the last year to not have a big flu wave which was multifactorial.

- One was that many of us were still working from home or sheltering in place at home, not socializing, kids were not in school and at home, and many more people were still wearing their masks when they were out and about.
- We also had a high number of people get the flu shot.



We had a similar number of people at AltaMed as far as patients get the flu shot in our last flu season as we did in the 2019 season. During the 2019 and 2020 flu seasons we had a similar number of flu vaccines, especially in the very beginning of the flu season.

This year things are different. We have kids that are going back to school, kids are still wearing their mask in school in our local areas, many more people returning back to work, and many more people socializing, people are tired of staying home because they are vaccinated and want to get out and want to start living their life, and visit friends and family.

The COVID vaccine does not protect you from the flu. There are some debatable arguments out there as to whether the flu vaccine may protect a little bit from a COVID infection but we don't have any scientific basis for why that might be. This year we may see a nasty flu season and cannot afford for our family members, our patients, or ourselves to get sick and it is really important that we get everybody vaccinated. Unfortunately we are behind where we were in the 2020 season for our flu vaccines. In the month of September we vaccinated 16% less people and so far in the month of October we are behind 77%. This data is only in regards to our patients.

Everyone that is 6 months of age and older should get the flu vaccine. Anyone that is coming into the clinic for a visit should not leave the clinic without a flu vaccine. Please make sure that you are talking to all of your patients about the importance of the flu vaccine even to those that have not received the COVID vaccine. If they are not going to get the COVID vaccine please just talk them into getting a flu vaccine because we need to try to prevent another epidemic illness this year, as we need to keep all the URI infections down as much as possible.

Another indicator of why we might have a bad flu season is that we are seeing a lot more Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) which is a common virus in kids and we are seeing much higher levels that we would normally see over the summer and in the fall. That tells us that the upper respiratory tract infection illnesses, similar to influenza could definitely have an opportunity to spread this year.

As for our 65 and over patients we have the high dose flu vaccine available for them. In regards to our staff, everyone needs to be vaccinated by the end of October. If you have not gotten your flu vaccine please make sure that you get it by the end of October. We have fun drives going on and watch the COVID alert or the Beat for more information about the gifts that are going to be given out for people that have gotten their flu shots. Dr. Brown is sponsoring \$100 gift for a lucky individual across the organization that has gotten their flu



vaccine by the end of October and we are also looking at any work location group that has 100% flu vaccines as they will be entered into a drawing to have lunch on Dr. Brown, once we start tallying up those numbers I can give you some more indication as to what clinics and workgroups are qualified for that drawing. If you have any questions, we do have our COVID Grand Rounds today at 12:15pm and Dr. Brown will be talking about questions related to the upcoming booster shots for Moderna, Johnson and Johnson and the upcoming vaccines for kids.

### **Human Resources**

Our HR Talent Acquisition team is growing and ramping up quickly to recruit mission driven candidates for one of the many open opportunities within the organization. In today's competitive market, we need everyone's help to connect with talent and invite you to help us spread the word about the wide range of career opportunities with AltaMed. There are many ways you can help spark a potential candidates' interest such as sharing a post about the great things happening at AltaMed, linking a job posting, or sharing your AltMed story on LinkedIn. You can also submit a direct candidate referral and earn an employee referral bonus. Some key openings are eligible for increased bonus amounts through Dec. 31. For more information about the referral program visit our Town Square page or email us at [Careers@altamed.org](mailto:Careers@altamed.org). Please direct candidates to [AltaMed.org/Careers](http://AltaMed.org/Careers) for more information

Looking ahead the Benefits team is gearing up for our annual open enrollment cycle which is slated for Nov. 1-19. Please mark your calendars and support your teams by sharing the dates and encouraging staff to sign up for one of the information sessions so they can learn more about all the benefits available to them. Dates for the information sessions will be communicated in the coming weeks.

In conjunction with the state order and AltaMed's Covid Immunization Policy, new signage is now posted at all sites to inform contracted personnel and vendors of the requirement to show proof of the Covid-19 vaccination or medical exemption. Please note that this requirement does not apply to patients, visitors, or delivery personnel. For questions about vendor vaccines please email Employee Health.

These are your HR updates for the week. Stay warm and safe.