



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 4, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

Handwritten signature of C.H. Huckelberry in black ink.

Supervisors Elect
Pima County Board of Supervisors

Re: **Recommendations from Clinical Leaders from Across Arizona to Address the Increasing Coronavirus Case Counts**

The dramatic increase in COVID-19 infection rates state-wide has led to a December 1 joint statement by the Chief Medical Officers of Arizona's largest health systems. (Attachment 1) Their letter requests that the Governor and the Arizona Department of Health take immediate action to enhance and strengthen mitigation measures. This letter has been covered extensively in the media, most notably by the Arizona Republic. (Attachment 2)

Recommendation	Pima County Response
Stop indoor dining	Action not taken
Limit gatherings of more than 25 persons	Covered by Pima County Health Advisory
Support enforcement of local ordinances	Covered by Board Proclamation
Reassess previously approved gathering permits	Process completed by the Health Department
Post restrictions	Covered under the Board Proclamation
Stop group athletic activities	Administrative action already taken by the Administrator and communicated to the Board
Curfew	Covered by prior Pima County Health Advisory

Many of these items have already been addressed by the Board and implemented by the Pima County Health Department. Those that have not are the subject of my December 3 memorandum and the current meeting, that includes recommendations that significantly strengthen the Board's prior actions in an effort to interrupt the widespread community COVID-19 transmission that has been experienced in Pima County.

Pima County's strategy to address the current COVID-19 surge includes all but one of the recommendations that were made by Arizona clinical leaders. The closure of indoor dining is not advised at this time since under the Governor's Executive Order restaurants are currently operating at 50% or less capacity, and only when adhering to very specific mitigation standards that have been articulated by the Executive Order and the Board Proclamation.

CHH/dym

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department

ATTACHMENT 1

December 1, 2020

Dr. Cara Christ
Director
Arizona Department of Health Services

Dr. Christ,

As the clinical leaders of the major health systems in Arizona, we are increasingly concerned that widespread transmission of COVID in the state is likely to severely strain, and potentially outstrip, available healthcare resources within the coming 2-3 weeks.

Multiple predictive models included in Appendix have been reviewed by Arizona CMOs, and all are in agreement with data that shows we are approaching a life-threatening COVID-19 surge. Certain parts of the state are already at capacity.

We greatly appreciate the partnership and collaboration from your office to help us evenly distribute patients, and the additional funding and assistance provided to support health system staffing needs. Given rapidly rising case counts and increasing hospitalizations, staff exposure to community spread, and new genomic evidence suggesting more rapid transmission is occurring, we feel swift action is necessary. We want to prevent Arizona hospitals from reaching crisis levels of care, avoid preventable deaths from COVID and keep children in school. Mitigation efforts take at least 2 weeks to begin to have an effect as illustrated in Appendix Figure D.

We believe it is imperative that the Governor's office implement enforceable measures to limit the spread and save the lives of Arizonans. It is our strong recommendation that these should be put in place within the next 72 hours, remain in place for 30 days and then be reassessed.

- Stop indoor dining
- No gatherings >25 persons
 - encourage and support enforcement for local ordinances
 - reassess previously approved gatherings/permits
 - post restrictions in an easily identifiable location on municipality websites
- Stop group athletic activities, including club sports
- Bi-directional COVID-19 roadmap execution and enforcement—for reopenings and ***closings***
- Curfew after 10 pm

These additional efforts would be in conjunction with those mitigation efforts that we know work: masking, social distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill.

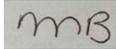
We have based these recommendations on a review of clinical evidence and recent meta-analysis of governmental actions that show these measures are highly effective in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-020-01009-0>). Given the impending roll out of effective COVID-19 vaccines, we believe there is clear benefit that will come from avoiding illness and its long-term effects, despite the near-term hardships that these measures may cause.

A healthy workforce and population are essential ingredients for a strong economic recovery. If fewer Arizonans are infected with COVID-19, we believe the state's financial prosperity can rebound more quickly and we can collectively return to a more normal lifestyle. While some individuals may choose to ignore restrictions, the majority will follow the rules without an elaborate enforcement mechanism. Strong messaging from the Governor's office and ADHS will create a sense of urgency.

Please help us, as the healthcare leaders of your state, to bridge this gap until the vaccine can be widely available to the public. This has been a long road for us all, but there is hope on the horizon.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marjorie Bessel
Chief Clinical Officer
Banner Health



Dr. Rick Anderson
Chief Medical Officer
Tucson Medical Center

Dr. Keith Frey
Chief Medical Officer - Arizona Division
Dignity Health



Dr. Michael White
Executive Vice President, Chief Clinical Officer
Valleywise Health



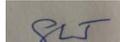
Dr. Mark Carroll
Chief Medical Officer
Health Choice Arizona



Dr. Anthony Torres
Chief Medical Officer
Yavapai Regional Medical Center



Dr. Stephanie Jackson
Senior Vice President, Chief Clinical Value
Officer
Honor Health



Dr. Alyssa Chapital
Hospital Medical Director
Mayo Clinic



Appendix

Figure A: IHME forecast showing that ICU bed capacity will be exceeded mid-December.

IHME 11/27/20 8am ([https://covid19.healthdata.org/United-States-of-America/Arizona?view=resource-use&tab=trend&resource=all resources](https://covid19.healthdata.org/United-States-of-America/Arizona?view=resource-use&tab=trend&resource=all%20resources))

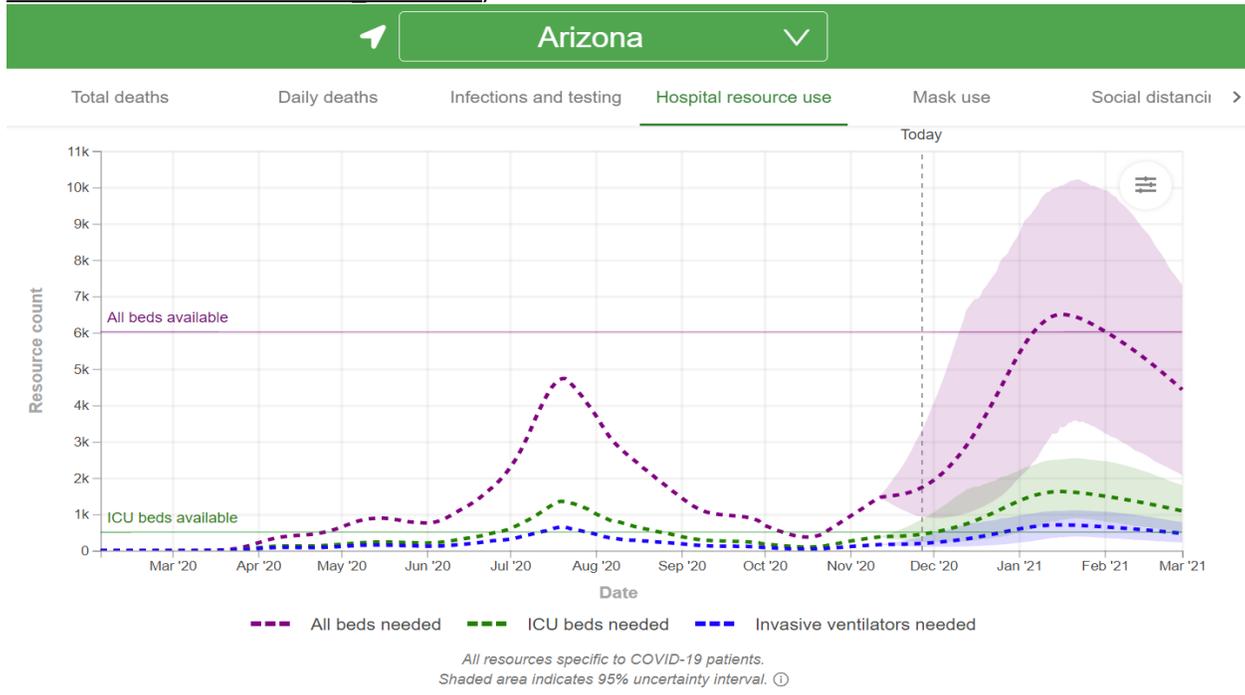


Figure B: ASU forecast model shows we will far exceed July peak hospitalization numbers by mid-December. (<https://publichealth.arizona.edu/news/2020/covid-19-forecast-model>)

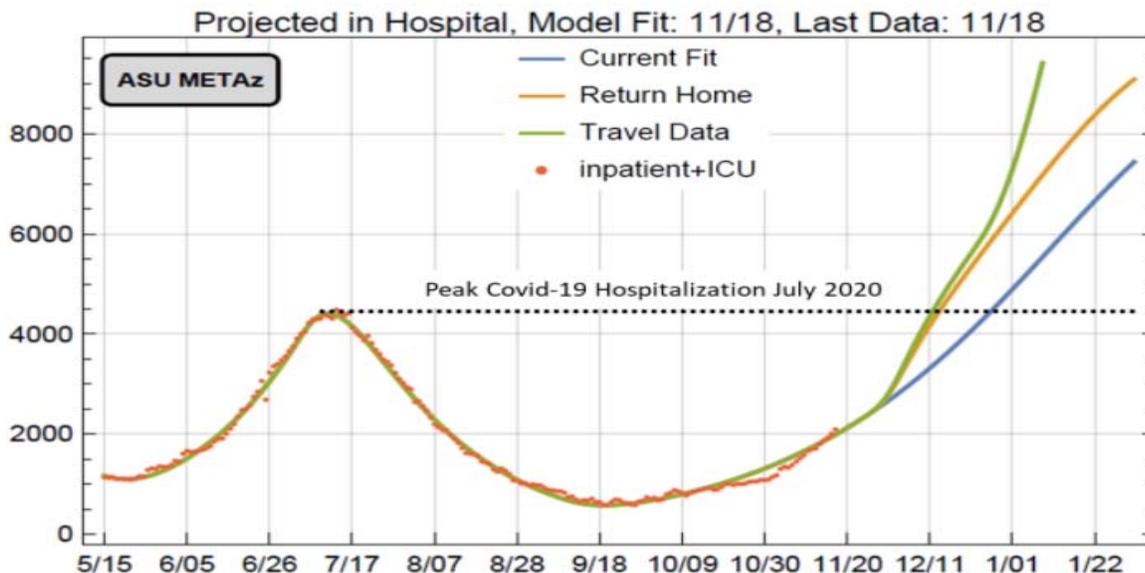


Figure 11. ASU Covid-19 Modeling Group Estimate of Total Covid-19 Hospitalization in Arizona through January 21st. Produced by Esma Gel, PhD, Megan Jehn, PhD, Anna Muldoon MPH, Health Ross, PhD, DNP, ANP-BC, and Tim Lant, PhD, MAS.

Figure C: Banner Health forecast model shared at a press conference last week shows piercing through 125% occupancy between 12/2/20 – 1/18-21. Additional forecasting from CommonSpirit Health confirms these concerning trends. (Banner Health forecast, press conference 11/24/20)

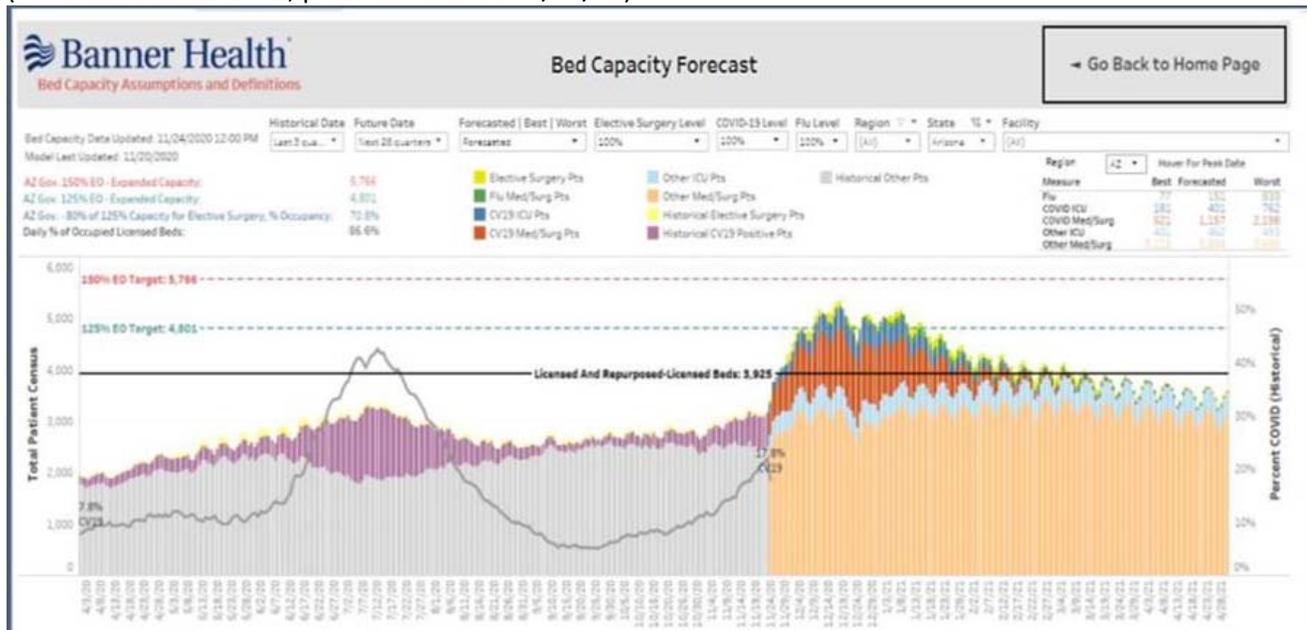
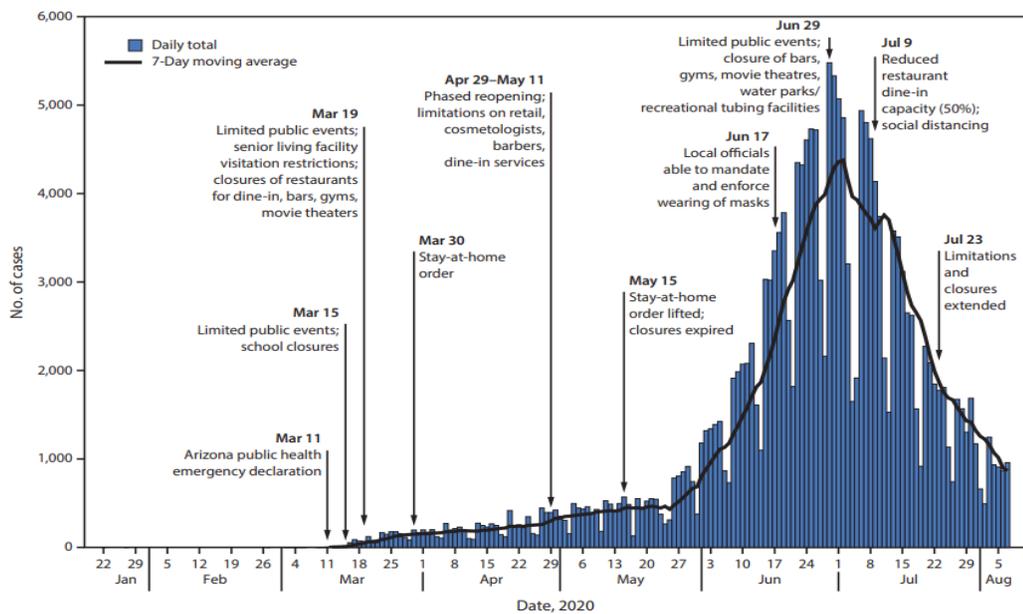


Figure D: AZ mitigation efforts take at least 2 weeks to begin, as shown in publication *Trends in COVID-19 Incidence After Implementation of Mitigation Measures — Arizona, January 22–August 7, 2020*, MMWR, Vol. 69/No. 40, October 9, 2020 (https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6940e3-H.pdf?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM39921&ACSTrackingLabel=MMWR%20Early%20Release%20-%20Vol.%2069%2C%20October%206%2C%202020&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM39921)

FIGURE. Selected community mitigation measures* and COVID-19 case counts† and 7-day moving averages‡ — Arizona, January 22–August 7, 2020



Abbreviation: COVID-19 = coronavirus disease 2019.
 * Issue dates are the dates the issuing official signed the order implementing the mandatory mitigation measure. In some instances, mitigation measures were effective either immediately or within 1 to 3 days of issue. <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-admin-orders>; <https://azgovernor.gov/executive-orders>.
 † As of September 1, 2020. Specimen collection date was used for confirmed cases, and symptom onset date was used for probable cases.
 ‡ Plotting of 7-day moving average began when cumulative case count exceeded 20 cases.

ATTACHMENT 2

HEALTH

Arizona health leaders want immediate COVID-19 intervention, including a curfew

Stephanie Innes Arizona Republic

Published 8:47 a.m. MT Dec. 2, 2020 | Updated 9:29 a.m. MT Dec. 2, 2020

A group of eight Arizona health leaders is asking for immediate state actions on a worsening COVID-19 crisis, including a statewide curfew and no indoor dining at restaurants.

The group of chief medical officers wrote a letter dated Tuesday to Dr. Cara Christ, the Arizona Department of Health Services director, that asks for the state to take action on their suggested measures within the next 72 hours, keep them in place for the next 30 days, and then reassess them.

In addition to a statewide curfew, the health leaders, want the state to end indoor dining in restaurants, to prohibit group athletics and other things.

"If fewer Arizonans are infected with COVID-19, we believe the state's financial prosperity can rebound more quickly and we can collectively return to a more normal lifestyle," the letter says.

"Strong messaging from the Governor's office and ADHS will create a sense of urgency. Please help us, as the healthcare leaders of your state, to bridge this gap until the vaccine can be widely available to the public. This has been a long road for us all, but there is hope on the horizon."

A full list of what the leaders want:

- Stop indoor dining.

- Prohibit gatherings of more than 25 people.

- Encourage and support enforcement for local ordinances.

- Reassess previously approved gatherings and permits.

- Post restrictions in an easily identifiable location on municipality websites.

Stop group athletic activities, including club sports.

The same requirements businesses had to follow to reopen should be used by the state to close businesses whose metrics worsen beyond acceptable levels.

Curfew after 10 p.m.

"These additional efforts would be in conjunction with those mitigation efforts that we know work: masking, social distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill," the letter says.

The letter follows dire warnings from research experts at both Arizona State University and the University of Arizona about looming crisis in Arizona hospitals as transmission of the COVID-19 virus continues throughout the state.

RESEARCHERS: Shelter-in-place order could avert 'catastrophe' in AZ hospitals

Signatories include Dr. Marjorie Bessel, chief clinical officer for Banner Health, which is the state's largest health system; Dr. Keith Frey, chief medical officer for the Arizona division of Dignity Health; and Dr. Alyssa Chapital, hospital medical director for the Mayo Clinic in Arizona.

"We want to prevent Arizona hospitals from reaching crisis levels of care, avoid preventable deaths from COVID and keep children in school. Mitigation efforts take at least two weeks to begin to have an effect," the letter says.

Multiple predictive models reviewed by those who signed the letter "are in agreement with data that shows we are approaching a life-threatening COVID-19 surge. Certain parts of the state are already at capacity," the letter says.

"We are increasingly concerned that widespread transmission of COVID in the state is likely to severely strain, and potentially outstrip, available health care resources within the coming two to three weeks."

In addition to Bessel, Frey and Chapital, the other names listed on the letter are Dr. Rick Anderson, chief medical officer for Tucson Medical Center; Dr. Michael White, executive vice president and chief clinical officer for Valleywise Health in Phoenix; Dr. Anthony Torres, chief medical officer for Yavapai Regional Medical Center; Dr. Mark Carroll, chief medical officer for Health Choice Arizona; and Dr. Stephanie Jackson, senior vice president and chief clinical value officer for HonorHealth.

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