



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Media contacts:

Melissa Burlaga, St. Luke's: 218-391-0037

Anthony Matt, Essentia Health: 218-428-1781

Dana Kazel, St. Louis County: 218-591-2219

Local hospitals, Public Health partner in public service announcement

Healthcare resources are strained. Medical workers are as committed as ever to care for their patients, but they're exhausted and pleading with people: Take COVID-19 seriously and do what you can to minimize virus spread.

This is the message in a new public service announcement (PSA) created by Essentia Health, St. Luke's and St. Louis County Public Health. The PSA features real doctors, nurses and public health staff who have been working tirelessly throughout the pandemic, and have been doing their best to care for patients through this latest surge that has overwhelmed healthcare systems across the country.

The [30-second video](#) was produced by Story North Productions, and will be aired on KBJR, KDLH, WDIO and FOX21 in Duluth, all of which are donating airtime for this PSA. Additionally, Midwest Communications and Townsquare Media will be running a radio version of the spot at no charge.

"We are in a crisis situation and so much of this is preventable if people get vaccinated and follow the preventative steps they've heard so many times. For those who are vaccinated, please get a booster. Boosters can significantly increase your protection against serious illness with COVID-19." said Amy Westbrook, St. Louis County Public Health Division Director. "None of this is easy, and we're all tired and want to be done with this. But as long as we're dealing with a highly contagious virus, we need everyone's cooperation to move past this."

"While it's true that most people who catch COVID-19 will recover, there are still many people dealing with very serious effects. That includes people who require hospitalization and then require long-term caregiving after they leave the hospital, which falls on their loved ones or long-term care facilities which are also severely strained," said St. Luke's Infectious Disease Specialist Dr. Andrew Thompson. "Our doctors and nurses want to help people and are as committed as ever, but we are also seeing tremendous burnout and we need people to realize just how serious this situation has become."

“We are so grateful to our local media for their assistance in helping spread this important message,” said Louie St. George III, public relations manager at Essentia Health. “COVID is real and it is dangerous. Limited bed availability in our hospitals is also real and dangerous. The vast majority of our COVID patients are unvaccinated. We can do better; we must do better. Our healthcare workers, who have given so much of themselves over the past 21 months, are mentally, physically and emotionally exhausted. Please, do your part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and prevent unnecessary strain on our health care resources — and unnecessary suffering.”

The full script of the PSA is as follows:

Here’s a reality check – COVID-19 is still here.

Rising cases are straining healthcare resources in our community.

We’re ALL tired.

We’re ALL exhausted.

Know that we’re still committed to caring for you.

But we need your help.

We’re asking you...

PLEASE

Get vaccinated.

Get your booster.

Mask-up in public.

Social Distance.

For you, your family, our community.

For all of us.

Thank you.

All three organizations will also be sharing the PSA on social media. They encourage people to share the spot on their personal social media feeds, to show their support and help spread the word even further.

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