

## **PMMA seeks to support employees head of vaccine mandate**

*September 7, 2021*

With a national mandate looming requiring all nursing homes to use workers vaccinated against COVID-19 or risk losing Medicare and Medicaid funding, PMMA (Presbyterian Manors of Mid-America®) is launching a campaign to encourage its remaining unvaccinated employees to reconsider.

“As a not-for-profit, faith-based organization, PMMA strongly believes that it is critical to follow our mission of providing quality senior services guided by Christian values, particularly those of love, compassion and respect,” said Bruce Shogren, president and CEO in a letter to families dated September 3. “PMMA leadership is asking employees to get vaccinated for the sake of others, which really equates to the Christian principle of love—to think of others before ourselves.”

PMMA is launching a targeted campaign to encourage those employees who have not yet vaccinated to do so.

“At this time, 97-percent of our residents and 66-percent of our employees system-wide are vaccinated,” Shogren said. “We have a goal to have all employees vaccinate – unless an employee falls under those standards and exceptions established by CMS, which we are waiting to receive.”

The “Why Vax?” campaign is based on the doubts and concerns of PMMA employees gathered from executive directors across the system. It reminds them of the avenues for speaking with our medical directors and nurses about their concerns with the vaccines. These concerns have been added to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents already being utilized in our communities. The FAQ’s have new embedded links to videos of fellow employees who talk about their initial doubts and concerns and why they decided to get vaccinated.

Employees who get vaccinated during this campaign are encouraged to share their reasons why with their teammates to encourage others to do the same.

The timing of the campaign coincides with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine receiving full approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), one of the most frequently mentioned hurdles to vaccination among those who have not yet received the vaccine.

“We want our employees to know we value them and consider them a blessing, which means we will take every means possible to keep them safe from COVID-19, including giving them time off to get their shots and providing incentives for completing the vaccination process,” Shogren said.

Shogren said PMMA remains committed to supporting and protecting employees. While Biden’s vaccination mandate may seem like the perfect solution, it’s focus on the long-term care industry does not take into account all the other healthcare providers that play a part in caring for seniors in our communities.

“This federal mandate assures unvaccinated employees an option to move to other healthcare organizations that are not under the same mandate and intensifies an ongoing staffing crisis that long-term care providers have been experiencing since the beginning of the pandemic,” Shogren said.

PMMA will continue to emphasize that vaccination, while a personal choice, is about doing the right thing to protect others and living out the mission that has sustained PMMA and its communities for 72 years.

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