



CHAPTERS HEALTH® SYSTEM

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chapters Health System Uses Creativity to Protect Clinical Staff, Patients from COVID-19

TAMPA, FL (March 2, 2021): [Chapters Health System](https://www.chaptershealth.org), a leading not-for-profit, community-based healthcare organizations based in Temple Terrace, today announced its progress to combat the spread of COVID-19. Throughout Chapters Health, clinical staff have cared for more than 1,100 COVID-19 patients, including 240 at the COVID-19 wing at the Melech Hospice House. Despite this statistic, cases among clinical staff have remained low, thanks to the effective use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety guidelines developed and implemented early in the pandemic.

“At Melech Hospice House, we use full PPE when caring for our COVID-19 patients and this has prevented the spread to our staff, patients and community,” said Rebecca Jensen RN, BSN Director, Inpatient Care at LifePath Hospice. “I feel these guidelines at Melech Hospice House and the strict use of our PPE with isolation on our COVID-19 wing has prevented spread.”

As an added layer of protection, all staff at the Melech Hospice House COVID-19 wing are required to change scrubs upon arrival and when they leave. They are also required to remain on the COVID-19 wing for the duration of their shifts.

To further protect staff and patients, Chapters Health succeeded in finding creative ways to provide staff access to vaccines.

“As hospice and home care organizations were not included in the state’s distribution of vaccine to healthcare workers, I am very thankful to our community partners, including but not limited to the Polk and Hernando County Health Departments, Oak Hill, St. Joseph’s and Tampa General Hospitals for stepping up and allowing our front line providers to receive vaccine at their institutions,” said Ronald Schonwetter, MD, FACP, AGSF, FAAHPM, HMDC, Chief Medical Officer at Chapters Health.

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“A special thank you to the [Polk County Health Department](#) who also transferred vaccine to Chapters Health System in order for us to establish an internal COVID-19 vaccine clinic to more easily vaccinate and protect our front line providers,” emphasized Schonwetter.

The organization also tested or arranged its clinical staff to be tested more than 3,000 times as a requirement for long term care facility entrance during the pandemic, in order to care for their patients residing in those settings.

About Chapters Health System

As a progressive leader and premier health system, Chapters Health System is dedicated to delivering innovative home health, palliative and hospice care along with durable medical equipment and pharmacy services. Since 1983 as a community-based, not-for-profit organization, Chapters Health has provided choices, education and guidance through its managed affiliates: Chapters Health Home Care, Chapters Health Palliative Care, Chapters Health Hospice, Good Shepherd Hospice, Hospice of Okeechobee, HPH Hospice and LifePath Hospice, located in Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Martin, Okeechobee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and St. Lucie counties. All offerings are provided in order to improve the patient/family experience well in advance of end-of-life needs. In 2020, Chapters Health was certified for the third consecutive year as a great workplace in the Aging Services category by the independent analysts at the Great Place to Work[®] Institute. To learn more, visit www.chaptershealth.org, like us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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