

Petersburg Medical Center

103 Fram Street
PO Box 589
Petersburg, AK 99833

Phone: 907-772-4291
Fax: 907-772-3085

November 16, 2020

Dear Mayor and Assembly Members,

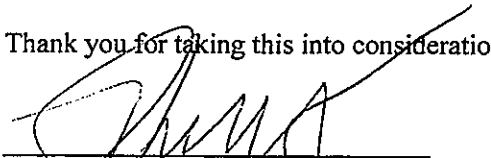
I am writing as the CEO of the Petersburg Medical Center (PMC) and as part of the Incident Command Team in support of the health mandates for the COVID-19 crisis.

The rise in COVID-19 cases within Alaska and our nation is alarming. Daily positive cases have increased 10 times from just a few months ago. Hospitalizations have increased from an average daily number of 30 to over 118 inpatients in the state. Healthcare facilities in Anchorage receive critical patients from rural communities like Petersburg and their ability to accept our patients is rapidly become a concern. There are reports of over 454 healthcare workers across the state who are not working because they have either tested positive for COVID-19 or are on quarantine because of exposure to someone who has COVID. PMC staffing and resource insulation to the pandemic is 'rail thin'. Pandemic fatigue is felt by everyone but now is not the time let our guard down. It is the time to increase our efforts.

Facial coverings, hand washing/hygiene and distancing. We have heard this message over and over. We are all tired of hearing it. Petersburg is one of few communities that can track, isolate and treat the virus. Primarily because the numbers have been small. We need to keep these small and manageable, so contact tracing is in 'real-time' instead of historical. Contact tracing and testing are the keys to reduce transmission in our community.

For the past 250+ days of this pandemic I have seen PMC staff work tirelessly to keep patients, residents and the community safe from COVID-19. The toll and fatigue on our staff is palatable. I am asking the assembly to support masking and safety measures to keep COVID out of our community and out of our facility.

Thank you for taking this into consideration,



Phil Horstetter, CEO/Incident Commander
Petersburg Medical Center