



Lower Umpqua
Hospital District
600 Ranch Road
Reedsport, OR 97467
541-271-2171

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Reedsport Community

Twelve months ago, optimism was abundant in my life. My wife and I were blessed to welcome our second child into our lives. We were well connected to our community and local church family. My wife was more than a year into owning her first small business. Positive changes were forthcoming to Dunes Family Health Care. Fast forward a year. My youngest is turning one and has yet to meet one set of his grandparents, with limited interaction with the other. We are still connecting to our church through a TV screen in our living room. My wife lost her small business. There has been significant turnover with staff, administration, and local providers in our hospital system and Dunes Family Health.

Despite all the change, optimism is now growing towards returning to some sense of normalcy. However, we know historically that infectious pandemics often have many waves that can span many, many years. Thankfully this time around humanity has a few more resources, most notably the vaccines developed through Operation Warp Speed. These vaccines put us well onto the path of returning to “normal life.” I write this to the community first to thank you for being strong through this year. Secondly, I want to also urge you to consider vaccination. I confess in the early stages of vaccine development I too had many reservations. “This was made far too fast,” “The technology is too new,” and “What about the unknown long-term side effects” were all common thoughts of my own. However, please trust that I have done my due diligence in vetting the medical literature for what I recommend. My love for this community and respect for this place my family calls home compels me to encourage and advocate for vaccination.

For me, receiving the vaccine came down to two questions. First, which is potentially more dangerous—the COVID19 virus or the vaccine? Secondly, what is best for my family and community? After I broke it down to those two fundamental questions, the choice became clear: give me the vaccine as soon as possible. My point is not to get into the weeds of all the data discussing if the vaccine is safe (it is) or effective (it is) or to interpret someone's commentary on COVID19 (although I'm happy to share my opinion when asked), but to show the main reason I have been vaccinated.

When I was young, my parents taught me to put others first—they called it the “Golden Rule.” It's the same lesson I'm trying to teach my own children. Getting vaccinated is a small but significant step in showing that I mean what I say. I hope it shows compassion, love for my neighbors, respect for others, and integrity.

All of us doing our part is what will get us back to normalcy. Receiving one of the vaccines enables us to quickly and safely fully support our local businesses, have our children return to school and play sports, and finally put this unusual time behind us.

Regardless of your choice to vaccinate, we all want to live in a community that is compassionate, loves its neighbors, and puts others first. Getting vaccinated against COVID19 is just a simple way to show this.

Jason Sargent, DO
Chief of Staff, Lower Umpqua Hospital
Medical Director, Dunes Family Health Care