



**Executive Office**  
110 N. Main St.  
Dayton, Ohio 45402  
PremierHealth.com

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Mary Boosalis  
President & CEO, Premier Health  
Dayton, Ohio

Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and the members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Premier Health operates adult, acute care hospitals at five locations in Southwest Ohio. Miami Valley Hospital is the third largest in the state and is the fifteenth largest in the nation. It offers the only adult Level I Trauma Center in the region and has one of the busiest emergency departments in Ohio. It operates a large Level 3B Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and a regional Burn Center. It also serves the third highest number of Medicaid inpatients in Ohio. Additionally, Premier Health provides a large primary care and specialty physician company, urgent care services, home health care, behavioral health services, a strong telemedicine network, and a myriad of community partnerships and outreach.

There is no question that the COVID-19 pandemic has touched the lives of everyone here and around the world, far too often with tragic results. I am here to address you specifically about our experiences at Premier Health as healthcare providers to an extensive population.

Thus far Premier hospitals have treated close to 5000 inpatients with the virus. Many more have been served through outpatient settings at our emergency departments, urgent care offices, physician offices, and through virtual telemedicine visits. Some are still dealing with the challenging residual effects of this devastating disease.

None of the work to fight the virus has been easy or without deep emotion. For example, despite the impact on patients and the health system, we were in support of the difficult but necessary decision to stop elective surgeries for a lengthy period of time. This was done to enable us to free up staff and to ramp up critical supplies and equipment. Currently we are a major provider of vaccinations in our community.

We have genuinely appreciated the recognition of the bravery and heroism of our front-line staff, first responders and essential workers on the part of our community. It is because of our

commitment to those we serve that our goals remain the same---save lives; keep our patients, staff, and community safe; and continue to move forward with dedication and determination.

The scope of this pandemic has required quick and decisive actions that were previously unimaginable. We have epitomized nimbleness and the ability to pivot quickly, reflecting the need to embrace change as new information became available from clinical experts. I can assure you this has not been a static experience, but one that has required real time modifications, and quick decisions--all to save lives and to keep people safe .

From the very beginning, I witnessed unparalleled cooperation and collaboration among health systems, public health officials and organizations such as the Ohio Hospital Association- and that continues today. Additionally, we were in close contact with Governor DeWine and his staff, participating in numerous conversations, meetings and information sharing. At every turn they have been exceptionally responsive and have sought out the advice of healthcare experts to understand options and to determine appropriate and necessary actions.

These communications have been centered around issues such as personal protective equipment, testing supplies and equipment, vaccine distribution and much more. Together we have been in a continual learning mode as we discovered more about the spread of the virus and preventative measures that work. Exciting treatment options that can better manage the disease were actualized. Thankfully, the efficacy of the vaccine is a beacon of hope, especially if a large majority of the populations participates.

I can tell you it has been critical to act quickly and make changes based on the best advice of medical experts--- to get the job done to save lives. In our view this clearly has been and remains a public health issue of the greatest importance.

One of the maxims of physicians is to “First, Do No Harm”. I started my career as a critical care nurse, and this is something that I profoundly believe. It guides me still today, both professionally and personally.

We are, of course, available to answer any questions. We appreciate your consideration as we work together to provide the health care needs of our community--- now more than ever in the face of this relentless and deadly virus.