



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
**Wednesday, November 2, 2022**

**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES COUNTY,  
CITY, HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS AND CHAMBER COLLABORATION TO  
“KEEP YOUR HOLIDAYS HEALTHY”**

*Flu shots and COVID boosters can keep holiday family gatherings safe*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello was joined today by business, government, school and healthcare leaders to announce a campaign to “Keep Your Holidays Healthy” by getting a flu shot and if eligible, a COVID booster. [National data](#) from the Centers for Disease Control shows that flu hospitalizations for this time of year are at the highest level since 2010. With ongoing hospital capacity issues, local healthcare systems are concerned about a spike in flu cases at upcoming holiday gatherings.

“COVID precautions during the past few years greatly reduced flu cases, but this year the flu is back and highly infectious,” said **Monroe County Executive Adam Bello**. “All of us are looking forward to spending the holidays with friends and family, including grandparents and young children. We can keep these intergenerational gatherings safe and everyone healthy by getting a flu shot and if appropriate, a COVID booster.”

The County Executive was joined by Rochester Mayor Malik Evans, Monroe County Public Health Commissioner Dr. Michal Mendoza along with representatives of the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, the Chief Medical Officers of the University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC) and Rochester Regional Health (RRH), community health centers and area schools to announce the “Keep Your Holidays Healthy” effort.

“The precautions outlined in the ‘Keep your Holidays Healthy’ campaign are as important today as they were during the height of the pandemic and the economic shutdown,” said **Mayor Malik D. Evans**. “The holiday season brings a convergence of factors that can drive our infection rates back to dangerous levels, so this is no time to get complacent. As we look forward to what is supposed to be a season of joyful gathering, I urge all of our residents to make sure they are fully vaccinated and exercise all of the necessary measures to keep themselves and others healthy and safe.”

The campaign features posters and other materials to be displayed by local businesses and companies: social, digital, billboard ads along with radio and television PSAs. The campaign refers people to [www.monroecounty.gov/healthyholidays](http://www.monroecounty.gov/healthyholidays), which has more information and a “Vaccine Finder” search engine for local pharmacies and healthcare centers dispensing flu

shots and COVID boosters. As part of the effort, the Monroe County Department of Public Health will use its mobile unit to reach vulnerable communities.

“My team has been providing flu and COVID vaccinations at shelters, soup kitchens, churches and other locations to make sure people living in historically underserved communities are protected against these viruses, which can be very serious,” said **Dr. Michael Mendoza, Monroe County commissioner of Public Health**. “And we continue to reach out to people in every corner of our community to provide information and resources. We want Monroe County residents to know how important this very safe and simple step is. Please get your shot today.”

Last week, Dr. Mendoza joined the chief medical officers of both health systems for a news conference describing how Monroe County hospitals face daily census numbers that exceed 100% of typical inpatient capacity. The number one factor is a dramatic increase in patients who no longer need hospitalization but cannot be discharged because of a shortage of nursing home beds in the community.

“We greatly appreciate the County’s help in providing the support nursing homes need to take patients who are ready for discharge and restore hospital capacity to normal levels,” said **Dr. Michael Apostolakos, chief medical officer of UR Medicine’s Strong Memorial and Highland hospitals**. “As we’re working on that issue, we need everyone to protect themselves now, because our hospitals currently have extremely limited capacity to care for a surge in flu or COVID patients that could be avoided if the community is willing to be vaccinated.”

“It’s extremely important this year to get your Flu vaccine — and your COVID vaccine too, if you’re eligible,” said **Dr. Robert Mayo, chief medical officer, Rochester Regional Health**. “With people starting to gather indoors for the holidays, vaccination is the best way to protect everyone’s health. Vaccination also avoids strain on our health care systems and the medical professionals who are working so hard to keep our community safe.”

The Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce will distribute campaign materials to its member companies and is encouraging its members to hold flu shot clinics in the workplace.

“Protecting ourselves, our businesses, and our community against illness is more important than ever as we recover from COVID-19 and work to grow our regional economy,” said **Bob Duffy, president and CEO, Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce**. “The Chamber is proud to support this campaign and challenges our members to participate in, or host, at least one flu vaccine clinic at which employees and family members can get immunized.”

Flu shots are available in most pharmacies and at several community health centers such as Jordan Health Services, Trillium Health, Mosaic Health and Oak Orchard Health. These community health centers provide direct services to some of our most vulnerable populations.

“We are offering same day/walk-in vaccinations at our Trillium Health Pharmacy, located at 259 Monroe Avenue. We are urging everyone to come out and get vaccinated,” said **Andrea DeMeo, president and CEO of Trillium Health**. “We are on

a bus line and we have plenty of free parking. Visit our website at [trilliumhealth.org](http://trilliumhealth.org) to book an appointment or call (585) 545-7200.”

“Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are devoted to eliminating barriers to health care,” **said Karen Kinter, interim CEO of Oak Orchard Health and Rochester Regional Health FQHCs.** “In our urban areas, FQHCs run by Rochester Regional Health in partnership with Mosaic serve more than 90,000 community members. In our suburban and rural areas, Oak Orchard Health serves more than 30,000. With flu season here, we’re ready with the vaccines people need to protect themselves and others. Depending on the location, you can make an appointment or simply walk in to get your flu shot now. Stay healthy this holiday season! For more information: <https://mosaichealth.org/rochester-area> and [https://oakorchardhealth.org/.](https://oakorchardhealth.org/)”

“The best care is preventive care. This year it is critical everyone receives their flu vaccinations. Many of us were masked throughout the pandemic, so flu was not as problematic. However, now that we are returning to our normal routines, we must maintain our health for ourselves and to protect our loved ones,” **said Dr. Linda Clark, chief medical officer of Jordan Health.** “Jordan Health remains committed to ensuring everyone has access to quality care, starting with the appropriate preventive care, such as physicals and immunizations.”

Foodlink is also partnering with Monroe County, helping to distribute flu and COVID vaccine information, resources and free COVID tests to the individuals and families it serves.

—30—

**Media inquiries:**

**Gary Walker, Director of Communications**  
[GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov)  
(585) 753-1064

**Meaghan M. McDermott, Deputy Director  
of Communications**  
[MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov)  
(585) 469-4365