

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Recognizing Ongoing Resolve and Resilience

January 13, 2022

I am writing in follow up to my [Campus Briefing](#) yesterday to thank each of you for all of your efforts at UT Southwestern during these recent challenging days. I know that the last two years have been difficult for everyone as the pandemic has impacted all facets of life here on campus and for each of you at home. And now, with this latest surge, we are experiencing the added stress of having many members of our UT Southwestern community in isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19 infection or exposure. We know that the next few weeks will continue to be very challenging. Yet despite these additional pressures, I have full confidence that the commitment and resilience of our faculty, staff, and learners will continue to prevail, as demonstrated throughout the pandemic.

Our ability to meet the needs of our patients has required personal sacrifice, especially from our faculty, nurses, APPs, administrators, and staff who are on the front lines of our work. Whether you have worked an extra shift to fill in for a sick or exposed colleague, or juggled family and personal commitments in addition to a growing caseload, please know that your effort is recognized and greatly appreciated. Many managers and supervisors have rolled up their sleeves to take on direct care responsibilities where needed. For those working to provide screening, testing, and sequencing of positive samples, I extend my sincere thanks to each of you as well. Without question, these sacrifices and many others, including by those 'behind the scenes' that may go unnoticed or unsung, enable our work to continue during this unprecedented time and are a testament to what makes our institution such a special place.

I would also like to acknowledge the exceptional work of our residents and fellows who often have to shoulder an increased load of responsibility during this surge. Our students in clinical environments too have pitched in, while those in preclinical classes, including our graduate students, have coped with disruptions of their curriculum.

Understandably, after two years of fighting the pandemic, the strain and stress of our work is great, and in that context I am taking this opportunity to remind you of the [wellness resources](#) available to our faculty, staff, and learners. If you need help, our [Employee Assistance Program](#) provides confidential support and is completely free. If you see a colleague you think is struggling, please encourage them to take advantage as well. Our [Student Wellness and Counseling Center](#) has a dedicated line (214-645-8680) for our learners, available every day of the year, including holidays.

At the onset of the pandemic, we established a [Behavioral Health Response Team](#), composed of APPs, psychiatrists, psychologists, and therapists available to help manage the stress and disappointment that the prolonged nature of the pandemic can bring. Calls and emails are treated confidentially, are not documented in Epic, or billed. To speak to a member of the team, please call 214-645-5686 or email behavioralhealthresponseteam@UTSouthwestern.edu.

On behalf of the Executive Vice Presidents and myself, I want to express our sincere thanks and continued appreciation for everything each of you are doing to help maintain the course of operations in all aspects of our mission. Our ability to meet the needs of our patients and their families is only possible because of our highly dedicated and motivated faculty, staff, and learners. Thanks for everything you do each day.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.
President
UT Southwestern Medical Center