

MNA Press Statement August 20, 2021

Montana Nurses Association (MNA) is the recognized leader and advocate for the professional nurse in Montana, representing over 3,000 RN (registered nurse) and APRN (advanced practice registered nurse) members. MNA promotes professional nursing practice, standards, and education; represents professional nurses; and provides nursing leadership in promoting high quality healthcare.

MNA recognizes that it will take all of us working together to control the spread of the Covid virus. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) uses the best science and data available at the time to protect the American people, knowing this is ever changing as the virus is evolving. The CDC recently announced that vaccinated Americans living in areas with high or substantial coronavirus transmission should wear masks while indoors in public areas. The current data suggests that infections and hospitalizations occur in a very small proportion of those who are fully vaccinated, but vaccinated people can spread the virus to others.

Bringing back masks for vaccinated people, especially while indoors, reduces the risk that a person with a breakthrough infection will infect an unvaccinated person, who remains at a much higher risk of serious illness or death ([Unvaccinated Americans make up the overwhelming majority of hospitalizations and deaths across the country](#)). While it is impossible to know who is vaccinated and who is not, let's take care of each other and our state by wearing masks. Covid related hospitalization data from the past eight weeks from [June 5 to July 30 shows that 89% of Montanans](#) who were hospitalized had **NOT** received the Covid vaccine.

Masks, handwashing, and social distancing remain the easiest, most non-invasive methods to help stop the spread of Covid. Let's keep our state open by simply asking those who are not vaccinated to wear a mask, and for those who are vaccinated, to kindly wear a mask while indoors in the public.

As Montana is currently experiencing an increase in Covid infections, hospitalizations, and deaths, let's act now to prevent further outbreaks. Encourage your family and friends to get vaccinated, wear a mask, and minimize the risk of Covid transmission. With the arrival of the Delta variant, the risk for children is rising. Hospitals are struggling to find nurses, even beds and oxygen as the [Delta variant surges](#). MNA is concerned about the many variants and encourages all Montanans to get vaccinated who can do so.

The [Covid vaccines](#) continue to be remarkably effective in reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, even against the widely circulating Delta variant. MNA anticipates [FDA authorization](#) of the Covid vaccine very soon and this should encourage more Montanans to get vaccinated. When science speaks, MNA listens.

MNA continues to ask Governor Gianforte, Lt. Governor Juras, and our elected officials to lead us through this pandemic with respect and support for our public health professions by endorsing their recommendations and supporting all of our healthcare providers and stakeholders who use science and evidence-based data to provide the best public healthcare for all of our citizens.

MNA simply asks that everyone in (or visiting) Montana get vaccinated for those that can, please wear a mask especially if unvaccinated, and kindly wear a mask (vaccinated or not) in public areas.

Keep Montana, your Montana healthcare workers, and fellow Montanans safe...

MNA kindly asks, get Vaccinated and Wear a Mask!