Consensus Statement
WNY COVID-19 Working Group
August 21, 2021

Healthcare providers should be aware of the following, and emphasize these points to patients:

- Currently the Working Group strongly recommends wearing masks indoors when not with your family or core group, and wearing masks outdoors in large gatherings, for both unvaccinated and vaccinated people. This recommendation is based on CDC guidance.
- **95% of recent COVID-19 deaths** among Erie County residents were people who were not fully vaccinated.
- The delta variant is **as transmissible as chicken pox**. COVID-19 vaccines provide good protection against moderate to severe disease, hospitalization, and death from the delta variant.
- COVID-19 vaccines prevent hospitalizations and deaths. It is still possible to get a COVID-19 infection after a vaccine. This does not mean the vaccine isn’t working.
- If an individual has had COVID-19, they should get vaccinated because natural immunity from a previous infection may not protect against the infection. Individuals who are treated with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma should wait 90 days for the immunization.
- There is evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe during pregnancy. However, becoming infected with the COVID-19 infection during pregnancy can cause poor outcomes for moms and newborns, and challenges with fertility.
- The more people get vaccinated for COVID-19, the less the spread, and the less opportunity the virus will have to mutate into something worse.
- **There is no racial, ethnic or age group that is safe from COVID-19.**

Some references:
Delta variant may evade natural immunity
Post-infection immunity may be less than vaccine-induced immunity Link 1 Link 2
Vaccines protect against delta variant
The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations’ support of this statement.

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