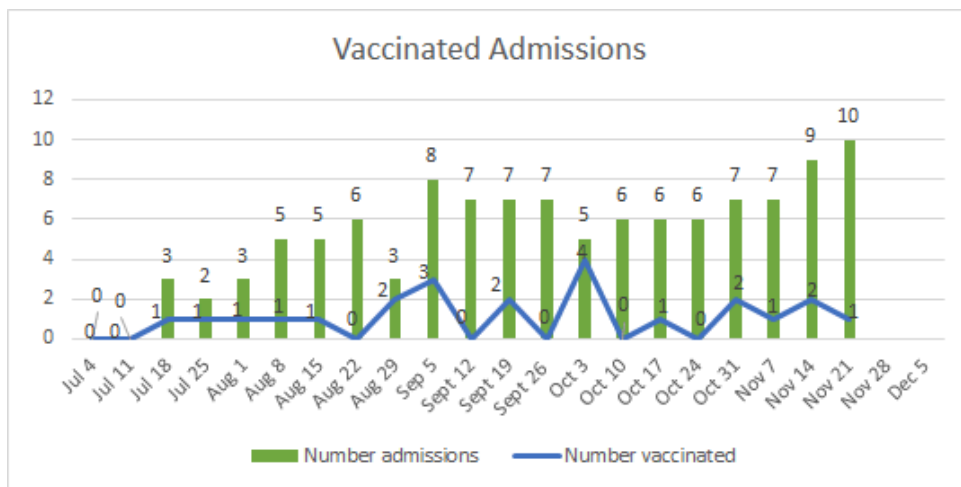




Like all hospitals in Northwest Ohio, Fulton County Health Center is also experiencing increased numbers of emergency visits and critically ill patients in the hospital. FCHC nursing staff and support staff have been working hard for the last 18 months with a critical crunch in the last two months due to the increasing number of patients and we expect it to be worse in December than October and November. This situation is affecting our capacity to care for patients with a record number of inpatient admissions with very sick people with COVID-19, patients experiencing increase ER wait times, and extended wait times for transfers to tertiary hospitals because they are full too, and yes, we have experienced more deaths in the last few months due to Covid-19 than the hospital has experienced in the past.

- We encourage everyone eligible for the **COVID-19 VACCINE** to be vaccinated or get the booster as soon as possible. Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce severe illness, hospitalizations, and death from COVID-19. **To understand the current situation, here is what FCHC is seeing in the hospital:**
 - **Since October 3, 2021 to November 27, 2021, FCHC has had 56 COVID Positive Admissions.** These do not include all those who came through the ER and Transferred out to other hospitals due to no bed availability or COVID conditions that require treatment FCHC does not provide.
 - **Fully vaccinated patient admissions – 11 of 56: Average age 72 years old**
Unvaccinated patient admissions – 45 of 56: Average age 56 years old.
 - **The average length of hospitalization with COVID-19 is 6 days.** Most are discharged on home oxygen if not transferred to another hospital. There is also a national shortage of portable and home oxygen. We have staff who spend hours hunting down a company that can provide home oxygen services.
 - **Average Emergency Department visit from arrival to discharge home has significantly increased in November to 4.75 hours.** (typical is Emergency Department visit prior to COVID was 2-3 hours hours)
 - **Emergency Department accommodates holding transfers to other hospitals from 1 to 4 days before a bed is available in another hospital. This may be referred to as ‘boarding patients’. It is now almost a daily occurrence for our Emergency Department to board patients for extended lengths of time or have to wait for a bed at FCHC.**
- Our Emergency Department remains open 24/7. Please utilize the emergency services for serious illness.
- Do not come to the emergency room just for COVID testing if you are not symptomatic. There are free test kits available at the Fulton County Health Center and local libraries and local pharmacies that will provide COVID testing.
- Consider utilizing FCHC Urgent Care for mild symptoms and treatment.

- Call you primary care provider to discuss symptoms, treatment options or make an appointment.
- We are now seeing Influenza in the community too so **BE SURE TO GET YOUR FLU SHOT**. We have also seen patients diagnosed with **BOTH Influenza AND COVID-19** which can also complicate ones illness and lead to poor outcomes.
- Below is a graph of number of admissions with diagnosis of COVID-19 by week through November 27th. (the week of Nov. 21 there were 10 admissions: 1 vaccinated 9 unvaccinated)



As our area continues to struggle with the impact of COVID, we want to thank our area residents for the support, thoughts and prayers each of you have shown us these past two years as we all have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Your thoughts, prayers, support and encouragement now more than ever makes us FCHC Proud...proud to serve this wonderful community, proud to make a difference in the lives of those we care for, and proud to provide the means for continued health and wellness to you and your family. Together we can make a difference!