

From: [Communications](#)
Subject: A message from Andrea: Our resolve together
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To: All Colleagues
From: Andrea Walsh, President and CEO

This past week we've felt deep pain over the murder of George Floyd and the racism and injustice surrounding his death. For people of color, and especially African Americans, it has been an especially painful and difficult time. Many people took to our streets in focused, righteous anger to honor the life of Mr. Floyd and to protest all that is broken in our society. Then, we watched in horror as these voices were drowned out by opportunists who took advantage of the situation to burn, loot and destroy. And then we watched our community begin to come together in moments of courage, from cleaning of debris, to sharing of food, to protection of lives and property from further harm.

As I write this on Sunday, we know that this story will have more chapters, both here and around the country. Today we're concerned for our colleagues, patients and members, especially those living and working in the neighborhoods most affected. We're concerned for the health and well-being of our most vulnerable, and about the already intolerable health care disparities that will widen in the short term. And we continue to have concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic and its disproportionate impact on communities of color.

Our team has responded this past week in extraordinary ways under some unbelievably difficult conditions. Please join me in thanking the many people across our organization who worked tirelessly to ensure that our patients and members could safely access care. This work is ongoing, but here are just a few examples of what we saw in the past few days:

- Our clinic teams restoring our facilities at Midway and Minneapolis Clinics and our Midway Dental Clinic (where services were suspended due to COVID-19) that were broken into during the riots. We expect to resume operations at the Midway and Minneapolis Clinics on Monday.
- Our pharmacy and member services teams working to help patients and members get medications as local pharmacies have closed or been destroyed.
- Our supply chain team creatively figuring out how to move medications, linens and supplies between facilities in a safe and secure way.
- Our hospital teams keeping our facilities safe havens for care. Despite being at full occupancy the entire week, colleagues at Regions made sure we were ready for additional trauma patients by transferring several patients to Lakeview on Saturday. We also relied on the strength of our system to safely move patients to Hutchinson and Westfields last week.

In short, as a health system we are meeting the call of our community as it counts on us most. Thanks to you, we plan on serving our community with full operations on Monday – recognizing the need to allow flexibility, given for example that public transportation in the Twin Cities is suspended through the end of Monday.

I'd like to share one moment from the past day that really touched me personally. This morning I learned that our Methodist team, which is already in Tier II surge due to COVID-19,

cared for several women in labor who were unable to deliver at Abbott Northwestern and Hennepin County Medical Center. Think of that. In one of the hardest, most tragic moments our community has ever known, we're opening our arms to help families welcome new babies right now. Babies who should have long, happy lives -- strengthened by good health, secured in justice, and surrounded and lifted by love. That's our vision for every baby, regardless of who they are. A vision that our community failed to fulfill for George Floyd.

As we deal with the pain, fear, and destruction of this past week, can we also make room for imagining the world we must build for the babies born in our hospitals today?

As we work through our own feelings, and as we honor the feelings of others and seek to more fully understand them, can we also create space to heal and act to address racism and injustice?

I believe, with all of my heart, that we can and must.

Now is the time for us to boldly focus on making our community better for all. It's why we're here, we all have a part, and it can't wait. Among our next steps, over the next few weeks, we will host a series of listening sessions where all colleagues will have an opportunity to share voices on how we can move forward as a place where everyone is welcome, included and valued. Please watch for an invitation coming soon.

With deepest gratitude,

Andrea