Case Counts

- NE States are on the increase with positivity rates
- 600 cases 12/2/2021
- Huge percentage in Bennington and Rutland
- 70% vaccinated and 30% unvaccinated
- 20% under age 12
- 12-13% over aged 60
- Continue decreasing rates of cases of those that are most vaccinated
- Number of hospitalizations in the 70s
- 23% if ICU beds are those suffering from COVID (9 ICU beds available)
- Number of deaths for month of November should show a decrease for the 3 prior months (data won’t be available until mid-December)
- Monoclonal antibodies – use is robust, uptick in clinical world, greater involvement of hospitals of trying to increase their capacity to deliver them, EMS delivering and administering at long term care facilities, but working with hospitals in regional way to help them increase their ability to access that treatment, hope to have the ability to mobile use this
  - Concern we have is if you’re unvaccinated you are less likely to endorse masking and less likely to test yourself early after symptoms and then makes you less of a candidate for monoclonal antibodies treatment
- 75% – 85% in ICU are unvaccinated
- Mental health Integration Council – Legislatively mandated with a goal to integrate primary care and mental health and substance use in primary care and mental health
  - Someone active in the primary care arena that is passionate about these issues that could join
  - VMS has a representative on this
- Evidence Based Mitigation Procedures – ML and Governor are taking the hits by not declaring a mask mandate. There are some people that think... Lack of mandate is one of the reasons we have such a high case count now. Mandate doesn’t seem like it’ll happen in Vermont
- Masking is a proven mitigation method is getting lost in the debate
- “Magical Thinking” – if we had had a mask mandate in place for a month or 2, we wouldn’t have the case amounts we do now
- Advises that gathering with only one other household could be an effective strategy to keeping yourself healthy, your family, and your community during the holidays.
  - Gathering with individuals in a more informal setting at home causes a lot of outbreaks
- Council of other Health Commissioners – other states with mask mandates, feel that the mask mandate created a tremendous amount of public disension and angst. A lot of difficulty of compliance. Public wants mask mandates to be rescinded in states where they are mandatory
- Stronger language from the governor on this would help better support our messaging to families in primary care
- Health Care community is clearly suffering - Burnt out, overworked, no end in sight. Rest assured that this is understood by the Commissioner and those above him.
Questions and Answers Section

If rapid tests become more accessible, I bet this population would be more likely to get tested. I hear from this population that they don’t want to get a PCR because the state "is tracking" them. If they can do a rapid at home maybe more likely to test?

ML: Thinks that’s great and is pivoting to more access of this testing. Getting closer to this by distributing tests at testing facilities. Supply is an issue

How can we best assure connection of the Mental Health Integration Council to the HRSA grant VT just received to stand up a formal Child Psychiatry Access Program here?

ML: Besides a primary care subgroup, there is a child psychiatry subgroup

What types of symptoms and duration of symptoms do you recommend for when using home kits? how accurate are theses?

ML: Whole symptom list for COVID-19. Duration of symptoms don’t matter as soon as you start feeling symptoms it is most valuable to test then. Do it on sequential days and not just a single time. Re-test if you still have symptoms and you’re at home test comes back negative or schedule a PCR test. There is a short form that you can submit so the state can track some data. State health departments are dealing with the dilemma that, when people test at home the state will not know if they are negative or positive. Self-test Result Reporting Form: https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6507748/Vermont-COVID-19-Self-Test-Result-Reporting-Form


What do we have in the toolbox that we should be using?

ML: Most of what we have learned about how to manage this pandemic is a higher level of restrictiveness that people want to see right now. Mandating sizes and households in gatherings, shutting sectors of societies down (bars), or going to a stay home stay safe policy/posture. You need a state of emergency for this. Talked about a lot but hard to put in a mechanism to support restrictiveness.