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[**Weekly Relays User Guide**](https://ispace.utmb.edu/xythoswfs/webview/_xy-12470404_1)

**TOPICS LEGEND**

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| C:\Users\krhensle\Desktop\SMALL LOGO (2).jpg | WEEKLY RELAYS | **August 12, 2021** |
| **YOUR DEPARTMENT NEWS** | **UTMB NEWS** |
|  | **COVID-19 UPDATES**Case of the Delta variant of COVID-19 continue to rise significantly throughout the state—often times exceeding the levels seen in previous surges. All faculty, staff and students throughout the state must continue to remain vigilant and practice safety protocols to protect themselves and others.**Updated guidance:*** **Masks now REQUIRED in ALL UTMB facilities:** For the safety of all employees, students, patients and visitors during this significant surge, masks are now required in **all UTMB facilities** for all individuals age 4 or older. This includes non-healthcare buildings. Given the proximity of our Health System facilities to non-clinical buildings, this change is essential to our efforts to preserve our health care mission throughout this stage of the pandemic. Masks must be worn in all public areas, including elevators, lobbies, hallways, restrooms, etc., as well as when two or more people are meeting in person.
* **Meeting Room Capacity/Distancing:** Remote meeting options should be used whenever possible. Meals or snacks should not be consumed when in-person meetings cannot be avoided. Avoid eating in the presence of others in break rooms and cafeterias. If unavoidable, maintain at least six (6) feet of distance from others while eating. In this case, keep unmasked time to less than 15 minutes.
* **Vaccines now available from Employee Health:** In addition to appointment options on the [vaccine page](https://www.utmb.edu/covid-19/vaccine/), vaccines are now available in UTMB Employee Health clinics on the Galveston and League City campuses, Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 4 p.m. Vaccine appointments for Employee Health clinics are not required, but can be made through MyChart to expedite the process.
* **Emergency Paid Leave:** UTMB has reinstated its enhanced emergency paid-leave benefit to assist employees impacted by COVID-19. Effective Aug. 7, 2021, employees who are unable to work or telework due to a qualifying COVID-19 reason may receive up to 80 hours of paid leave. For more details, please refer to the emergency paid-leave summary document (<https://utmb.us/554>) and frequently asked questions (<https://utmb.us/555>).
* **Elective procedures:** To ensure inpatient capacity, effective Aug. 10,  UTMB began rescheduling elective surgeries that require a hospital admission when doing so will not negatively impact patient care outcomes. Elective procedures and surgeries that do not require an inpatient stay will continue as scheduled.

*(continued)* |
| OPICSLEGEND |  PATIENT CARE EDUCATION & RESEARCH INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT CMC |
| **AROUND UTMB** (Use the legend above to quickly find items of interest to your team) |
| **COVID-19 UPDATES (continued)****Clinical PBL positions to address current surge:**Several UTMB registered nurses who are not currently working in our clinical areas have expressed interest in picking up shifts to help support staffing needs during the current COVID surge. Pay By Letter (PBL) positions have now been approved for those who would like to volunteer to pick up extra shifts within the patient care areas. If interested please complete the [Surge Clinical PBL Position Survey](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2FPages%2FResponsePage.aspx%3Fid%3DbSXve9uFJkWnLTGuolRoUgaH1DpgvU9MpoRXd-ueIEVUQTk5WFdTUjlET0Y2TTFXNUk1QTQ0RlJSMC4u&data=04%7C01%7Cpaevans%40utmb.edu%7Cf1db8985834b4bbab26d08d95d78c315%7C7bef256d85db4526a72d31aea2546852%7C0%7C1%7C637643595550231066%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=Q1%2Fd%2BwmKAegqkyBoBbQMY4AlNVhA61oZVRWnh3vok4Q%3D&reserved=0) or contact Melissa Gonzalez (mkgonzal@utmb.edu) for more information.**Quick Links:*** [**Aug. 9 Executive Leadership message**](http://intranet.utmb.edu/iutmb/article/2021/08/09/from-executive-leadership-prevent-the-spread-of-covid-19-in-our-workplace) regarding safety protocols and testing requirements for employees and students; emergency leave for employees
* [**Current visitation limits**](https://www.utmb.edu/hce/info/hospital-visitation-policy) for hospitals, emergency departments, urgent cares and clinics
* [What to do if you are exposed to COVID-19](https://liveutmb.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/s/collaboration/webfiles/ERMz0L23NL5AikjkStbRZeIBvt5IfqTYT_lRcDU8tS2FQw?e=0RsiSl)

**Watch the Aug. 11 Q&A session on current COVID-19 conditions:**Gulshan Sharma, and other key members of the COVID-19 Clinical Task Force presented a COVID-19 update and question and answer session that covered the Delta variant, vaccination rates and updates, hospitalization rates, clinics and testing. A special presentation by UTMB doctors on pediatrics, fertility and pregnancy was also included. The recording is available at <https://utmb.us/55a>.**Next Health Care Unmasked episode on August 18**: UTMB’s chief medical officer Dr. Gulshan Sharma and Dr. Janak Patel, director of infection control and healthcare epidemiology at UTMB, will join host TJ Aulds on the August 18 edition of Health Care Unmasked to discuss and provide updates on the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus. The episode will air at 5 p.m. on the i45 Now Facebook channel at <https://www.facebook.com/i45NOW>.**Deadlines extended to use UT FLEX funds for 2020-2021 benefits plan year:**Employees participating in a UT FLEX Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) and/or UT FLEX Dependent Day Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA) for the 2020–2021 benefits plan will have until Aug. 31, 2022~~,~~ to incur new eligible expenses and to submit claims.* Previously, the deadline for using DCRA funds was Aug. 31, 2021, and the deadline for filing claims was Nov. 30, 2021.
* Previously, the deadline for using HCRA funds was Nov. 15, 2021, and the deadline for filing claims was Nov. 30, 2021.

Please be advised that the deadlines for incurring expenses and filing claims for both accounts will return to normal for those participating in the 2021–2022 plan year. To view your UT FLEX account balance(s), spending guidelines and eligible health care and dependent care expenses, visit [www.myutflex.com](http://www.myutflex.com/).**Important Reminder—Aug. 31 deadline for Maximum Vacation Leave Carryover:**All employee leave time used through Aug. 31, must be reported, submitted and approved on timecards by **5 p.m. Aug. 31, 2021**. After this deadline, all vacation leave balances in Kronos exceeding the [Maximum Vacation Carryover](https://www.utmb.edu/policies_and_procedures/IHOP/Employee/Leave/IHOP%20-%2003.06.12%20-%20Vacation.pdf) (see IHOP 03.06.12 Section IX) will be converted to sick leave. Historical correction requests may be submitted until  5 p.m., Aug. 25. Thereafter, requests should be directed to payroll.services@utmb.edu. Payroll Services will not be able to make any leave time adjustments in FY22 for vacation leave hours which are converted to sick leave. For questions, please call Payroll Services at (409) 747-8078.**Wenke joins UTMB, Shriners Children’s Texas:**Joseph C. Wenke, PhD, will join UTMB as professor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation, and director of research, Shriners Children’s Texas, on Aug. 16. Dr. Wenke joins UTMB from the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) in San Antonio. There, he has served as manager of extremity trauma and regenerative medicine since 2008, leading a group of scientists, clinicians, surgeons, research nurses, research technicians and students to improve outcomes of battlefield wounds, such as open fractures and burns. We look forward to welcoming him and are excited for what he will bring to UTMB and Shriners Children’s Texas.  **The Joint Commission Questions of the Week**:***What is the best way to respond to a surveyor’s questions?**** If caring for a patient, politely indicate you will be right with the surveyor and arrange for someone to cover your patients.
* Keep your responses focused and specific to the question. Don’t elaborate or give opinions. Keep the answers short and only answer what was asked; KISS = Keep It Short and Simple. There is a tendency to “over-answer” a question when you are nervous. This can have a domino effect, leading the surveyor down a path he or she didn’t intend to go.

  ***My co-worker clams up when she’s nervous. Can I help?**** Definitely. If you are present when someone else is being interviewed by a surveyor, gather around the surveyor, support each other and feel free to add relevant information without being intrusive. Respond to questions with confidence—you know the answers better than anyone!

  ***What are other tips to help on interacting with the surveyor?**** Know your patients even if you have been off for a few days.
* Avoid words such as “usually” and “sometimes.” Be confident that the system works consistently.
* Be careful not to say “this is the way I do it” when asked about a hospital or department policy/process. The correct answer is: “This is the process/policy.”
* One of the surveyor’s goals is to educate us about other or better ways to do things. Take advantage of suggestions or information that they are willing to provide.
* It is important to be prepared, be professional, and use good manners during a hospital survey.
* If you have questions, contact Janet DuBois at jbdubois@UTMB.EDU or (409) 747-9457.
 | **ACTION ITEM****Diversity Engagement Survey:**UTMB is conducting a Diversity Engagement Survey to evaluate the university’s diversity and inclusion climate. All faculty, staff and students are invited to take part in the survey, which will be available at <https://des.surveystar.com/utmb/> until Aug. 27. The survey has been developed in conjunction with the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and it is completely confidential. Your feedback will help identify challenges to diversity and inclusion and leverage opportunities for improvement; enhance UTMB’s policies, practices, and programs related to diversity and inclusion; and raise awareness of diversity-related efforts across the university. For questions or more information about the survey, please email tjdagost@utmb.edu or culture@utmb.edu. |
| **DID YOU KNOW?**On Aug. 16, UTMB Health—in partnership with the Angleton Danbury Hospital District—will open the doors to the newest clinical Primary Care and Specialty Care Clinic, Dave Bleakney Building. Located at the intersection of Highway 288 and Highway 35 (Angleton), the following clinics will be seeing patients in their new locales: * UTMB Health Family Medicine Angleton (979) 849-6467, relocating from 135 E. Hospital Drive
* UTMB Health Orthopedics, Angleton (979) 849-9557, relocating from 2327 E. Mulberry, Angleton
* UTMB Health Stark Diabetes Clinic (Endocrinology) (979) 848-9110, relocating from 146 E. Hospital Drive, Suite 208
* UTMB Health Neurology, Angleton (979) 319-3001, relocating from 146 E. Hospital Drive, Suite 103
* UTMB Health Urgent Care, Angleton (979) 849-6467, relocating from 2327 E. Hospital Drive (as well as the pandemic location of 135 E. Hospital Drive, Angleton)

 In this newly renovated 18,735-square-foot office building, patients will have access to a convenient and centralized registration area, 36 spacious exam rooms, full-service radiology and laboratory services, as well as a state-of-the-art security system and free Wi-Fi. The Urgent Care Clinic has a separate entrance, located on the west side of the building, allowing for extended hours of 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week. For more information about the staff and clinics relocating to the Bleakney Building, visit [www.utmbhealth.com/bleakney](http://www.utmbhealth.com/bleakney).**Network Access Control is coming to UTMB:** Information Technology Services and the Office of Information Security have been diligently working to fortify UTMB’s cybersecurity defenses to further protect against ransomware attacks, unauthorized intrusion attempts and a multitude of other harmful cyber events. Information Technology Services will launch Network Access Control (NAC), which ensures only authorized and secure devices connect to the UTMB network, over the next six weeks across all campuses, starting with the Galveston Campus on Aug. 16. NAC is necessary because currently any user can connect a device to UTMB’s wired network, regardless of its security configuration or intended functionality. Unauthorized, unmanaged and improperly configured devices on the UTMB network have historically been a source of cybersecurity mishaps because they are easily compromised, used to spread malicious software throughout the university and have conflicted with legitimate resources, resulting in network outages. NAC will force devices to be registered prior to getting access to the UTMB network, and this will ensure all connected devices meet or exceed the minimum security standards set by the Office of Information Security.Phase One of the NAC project only affects the wired network and most of the UTMB population won’t notice it because UTMB’s Network Operations team has identified and pre-registered all devices that are currently attached to the network. However, new devices connecting to network will need to go through a registration process. NAC will be launched on the campuses as follows:* Galveston: Aug. 16
* League City: Aug. 30
* Angleton Danbury: Sept. 13
* Clear Lake: Sept. 27

If you experience limited connectivity on or after go live at your campus or you are attaching a new device to the wired network, you will need to contact the UTMB Service Desk at (409) 772-5200 or complete the NAC registration form at <https://utmb.us/51a>. After the go-live dates, unregistered devices will be restricted to the guest network but will be able to connect to internal resources through the AnyConnect VPN or through MyCitrix (mycitrix.utmb.edu). For more information, contact the Office of Information Security at (409) 772-3838 or email security@utmb.edu.**Weekly Wellness Recap:**This month's theme is all about resilience and understanding how to build skills to help us get through setbacks.* Focus on self-efficacy—you can do what you set your mind to.
* Focus on self-awareness—you can understand and manage your emotions and responses.
* Focus on optimism and hope.
* Focus on positivity and positive emotions to boost well-being.
* Write your worries down and save them for a specific, later “worry time.”
* Challenge negative thoughts by considering an alternative interpretation (reframe it).
* Get out of your area for a little bit today to refresh your mind.
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