



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

# CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS OF BAYADA AND FAMILY MEMBERS



BAYADA Clinical Manager Pam Compagnola, RN

## Join Us in Recognizing *Our Essential Heroes!*

BAYADA's 2020 Contest for Clinicians is underway

When you work for BAYADA, being *essential* is nothing new. We believe that our employees are our greatest asset because they provide vital care to clients like you with *compassion, excellence, and reliability*—BAYADA's core values. Employee recognition has always been a cornerstone here—even in times of uncertainty. Which is why now more than ever, we are determined to show them just how much they are appreciated and valued.

BAYADA's 2020 Contest for Clinicians is recognizing and rewarding Essential Heroes who go the extra mile so that those in need can *have a safe home life with comfort, independence, and dignity*.

### Help us recognize your everyday heroes

Since the start of our 10-week contest on October 5, all BAYADA field employees—including home health aides, nurses, therapists, behavioral health workers, hab techs, and others—have been eligible to win thousands of dollars in cash during our weekly, runner-up, and grand-prize drawings. Office staff, colleagues, and community partners have been taking part, and now we ask you to do the same.

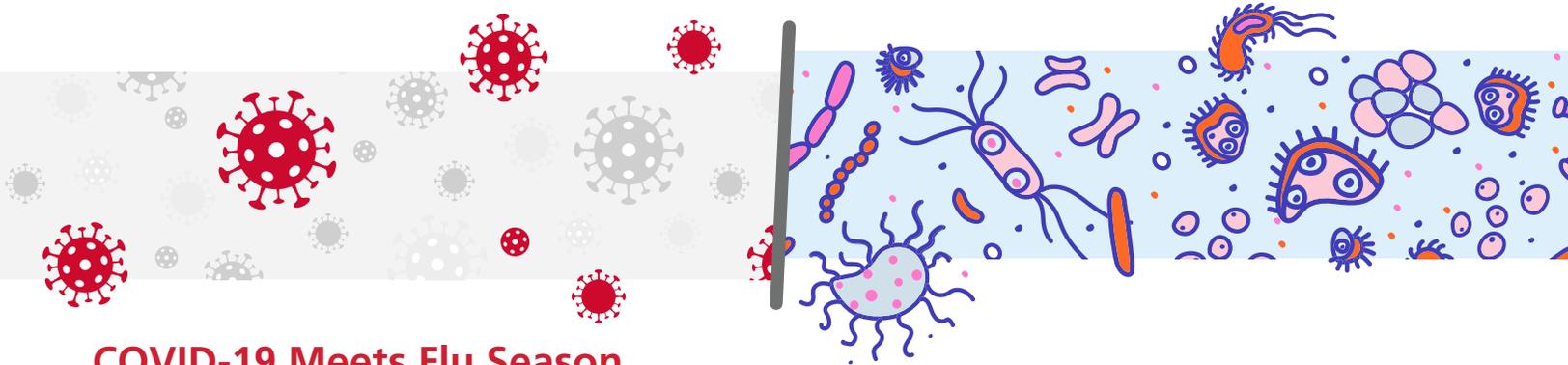
If your BAYADA clinicians are *Essential Heroes* to you, we ask that you visit [bayada.com/contest](https://bayada.com/contest) to submit contest entries in their honor. Not only will each entry give them a chance to win, but your kind and uplifting words will make their day! If you do not have access to the internet, please call your BAYADA service office; share how your clinicians are providing care with *compassion, excellence, and reliability* to ensure the highest quality of care; and ask them to submit entries on your behalf.

**The contest ends December 13—thank you in advance for your participation!**

Photos taken prior to COVID-19.



Want to receive a digital version of the CARE Connection Newsletter? Email us at [CAREConnection@bayada.com](mailto:CAREConnection@bayada.com). Please indicate if you would prefer to receive our newsletter for pediatric or adult clients.



## COVID-19 Meets Flu Season

### What to know and what to do to best protect yourself this fall and winter

**After months of social distancing, hyper hand washing, and vigilant mask wearing, are you ready for flu season? It's coming and it's important to understand how the flu is similar—and different—from COVID-19, and what you can do to protect yourself and others.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), influenza (flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. They have many similarities and some important differences.

Since many of their symptoms are similar, it may be hard to tell them apart. The following will help you understand what features the two viruses have in common, and which are unique to each.



#### Symptoms

**Common to both:** Fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, fatigue (tiredness), sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle pain or body aches, headache, or diarrhea and vomiting (more common in young children with influenza). New onset of shortness of breath or difficulty breathing has been reported with COVID-19 infection. These symptoms can also occur with influenza infection, but are usually seen among those with severe illness or other complications of influenza, such as pneumonia. For both viruses, symptoms can range from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe. It's important to note that it is possible to spread the flu or COVID-19 when you are asymptomatic.

**COVID-19 only:** One symptom that is unique to COVID-19 is a change in (or new loss of) taste or smell.

#### High-Risk Groups

**Common to both:** Older adults, people with certain underlying medical conditions, and pregnant women.



#### Transmission

**Common to both:** Both COVID-19 and flu can spread from person-to-person, especially those who are in close contact with one another. Frequent handwashing, mask wearing, covering coughs and sneezes, social distancing, and regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces are all ways to reduce the spread of both viruses.

**COVID-19 only:** COVID-19 is transmitted through smaller droplets that are dispersed into the air when people with the illness cough, sneeze, or talk. These small droplets make it easier for COVID-19 to spread from one person to another because they can be inhaled through the nose or mouth or can enter through the mucous membranes of the eyes.

**Flu only:** Influenza is transmitted through large droplets that are made when people with the illness cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can then land on surfaces. If a person touches a surface or object that has virus on it and then touches his or her own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, they may get infected.

#### Contagious Period

**COVID-19 only:** Most people who become infected with COVID-19 develop symptoms within 5 days. However, symptoms can develop anywhere from 2-14 days after initial infection. A person infected with COVID-19 may be contagious to others beginning 48 hours before symptoms develop and may remain contagious for up to 10 days after symptoms first appear. People with severe illness or people with weakened immune systems can be contagious for up to 20 days from when symptoms first appear.

**Flu only:** Most people infected with the flu develop symptoms within 1 to 4 days. Those infected with the flu can be contagious to others beginning one day before symptoms develop. They are most contagious during the initial 3-4 days of their illness, but many remain contagious for about 5-7 days after symptoms begin. Children and people with weakened immune systems may pass the virus for longer than 7 days.



#### Complications

**Common to both:** Both COVID-19 and flu can result in complications, especially among those at high risk. Some complications include pneumonia, sepsis, or organ failure.

**COVID-19 only:** COVID-19 can also cause life-threatening blood clots in the veins and arteries of the lungs, heart, legs, or brain.

## Recovery

**COVID-19 only:** The recovery timeframe for COVID-19 can vary depending upon severity of illness, but most people experience improved symptoms within 10 days.

**Flu only:** Most people with the flu will recover in a few days to less than two weeks.



## Vaccinations

**COVID-19 only:** Currently there is no approved vaccine against COVID-19.

**Flu only:** There are multiple, safe influenza vaccines produced annually, including a special high-dose vaccine for people 65 and over.

## Protect yourself with a flu shot!

The CDC is strongly recommending vaccination against influenza for the 2020-2021 season. It is a simple step you can take to protect yourself, your loved ones, and others in the community.

## The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months or older get a flu vaccine by the end of October.

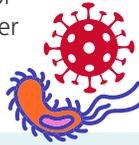
Getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever during 2020-2021 to protect yourself and the people around you from flu, and to help reduce the strain on health care systems responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. If we can keep more people healthy this winter, we can ensure that resources are available to care for those who are critically ill from influenza, COVID-19, or other serious medical conditions.

## Are flu vaccines safe? Yes.

For more than 50 years, hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received seasonal flu vaccines.

## What to do if you're not sure if you have the flu, COVID-19, or something else.

Contact your BAYADA office and your physician to discuss your concerns and follow their advice regarding testing, treatment, and symptom management.



## Champions Among Us | Virtual Legislative Visits: An Effective Way to Advocate from the Convenience of Home

**Matt A.**, 27, loves to travel. He remembers his visits to Canada, San Diego, and Disney World as the best vacations ever with his family. However, Matt, who has cerebral palsy and epilepsy, has not been able to travel for several years. A persistent wound developed on Matt's hip, requiring multiple surgeries in 2015. Each surgery required antibiotics, which worsened his seizures and led to multiple pneumonias, weakening his lungs and resulting in the need for a tracheostomy and continuous oxygen.

According to BAYADA Clinical Manager **Sara Miller**, Matt requires night nurses so he can be monitored for seizures and respiratory distress, as he is at high risk for pneumonia. "Without private duty nursing, Matt would have to be institutionalized," Sara explained.

Matt's parents have insurance through their jobs, however, neither policy covers home care nursing, forcing them to rely on a Medicaid waiver. Yet, in Missouri, Medicaid reimbursement rates are so low, it is difficult to attract nurses to care for clients with complex medical needs.

"When Matt came home in 2016, we were told he wouldn't live past three weeks," said his mom, **Jodi**. "He is a miracle."

A passionate advocate for her son, Jodi jumped at the chance to meet with a state legislator to explain the need for higher home care reimbursement rates. Only one problem, the need to avoid in-person contact due to COVID-19. That's when they agreed to a live video visit with Representative Robert Sauls.

"Without the need to worry about travel to and from a client's home, the virtual visit enabled Representative Sauls to spend more time listening and asking questions," said BAYADA Missouri West Skilled Director **Kelci Stafford**.

During the virtual visit, Jodi told Representative Sauls how much Matt's nurses have improved his quality of life and have kept him safe and out of the hospital. "I really felt heard, like he understood why this is so important," she said.

While some nurses choose higher paying work in a hospital or long-term care facility, Matt's current nurses are not in it for the money. "I'm fortunate to be able to do what I love," said **Diane Johnson**, LPN. "It's about the love and quality of care I can provide to Matt."

Despite Matt's dedicated nursing team, low reimbursement rates have left him with unstaffed weekend hours. Jodi hopes the virtual visit with Representative Sauls is the first step towards solving this long-standing issue. "He took the time to learn about home care," she said. "He said he was willing to support us and meet further to work on these initiatives."



BAYADA client Matt A. with his nurse Diane Johnson, LPN (Photo taken prior to COVID-19)

Virtual visits with legislators are an effective way for BAYADA clients and their families to advocate for home care, without the need to leave home. For more information on sharing your family's story during a virtual legislative visit, email [advocacy@bayada.com](mailto:advocacy@bayada.com).



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Content in this newsletter is provided as general summary information for our clients and is not intended to take the place of personalized medical guidance. We encourage you to seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care professional if you have specific questions about your care. BAYADA specialty practices include Home Health Care, Pediatrics, Hospice, Behavioral Health, and Habilitation. Services may vary by location.

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## Keeping You Safe and Engaged During the Holidays

The holidays can be fun, festive, and magical. They also can be hectic and challenging—especially for those with special medical or assistive care needs. This year, when the risk of Coronavirus transmission will keep most of us out of public places and large gatherings, take the opportunity to re-imagine traditions that will maximize the joys of the season and minimize the stress.



**Here are a few planning tips to help you enjoy the holidays while staying safe and well:**

### Keep it simple

2020 has been the year of a “new normal,” so everyone understands the need to modify family celebrations to fit your current lifestyle. Scaling

back and creating your own mix of old and new traditions can allow for a much more balanced and stress-free holiday season.

To help with your decisions, focus on the relationships and memories that matter most. Be realistic about your schedule, comfort, and safety, and do not feel guilty about opting out of plans that feel like a worry or a burden. Your loved ones will be happy to find alternative ways to share quality time with you this holiday season, such as virtual gatherings using video technology.

### Ask for what you need

Your BAYADA office is standing by to support you during the holidays. Give your office as much notice as possible to start

working on any schedule changes and additional care needs. Your care team also can help ensure that any visitors observe safe infection protection procedures.

In some cases, your BAYADA care professionals can plan to travel with you on a day or overnight visit. If you are preparing for a trip, contact restaurants and hotels ahead of time to ask about their infection prevention measures and accessibility services. Your BAYADA care team can help you order medications, infection prevention and medical supplies and pack a travel go-kit.

### Ensure a safe environment

Visits to friends and family could be a welcome change and great fun; just consider and prepare for the risks. For example, throw rugs, dim lighting, extension cords, decorations, and tight spaces can create tripping hazards for seniors and those with balance issues. With advance notice, your host can keep those concerns in mind when preparing for company. They also can advise you of a quiet space for medical care or taking a break, if needed.

If you are going out, arrange to have reliable assistance to, from, and during a gathering. Taking turns spending time with individual loved ones and helpful companions will give everyone a chance to connect meaningfully and enjoy the festivities.

Even in a public health crisis, it is still possible to make the most of the peace and joy of the holiday season. It is our joy to help you celebrate and make precious memories with loved ones.

**Happy Holidays!**