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Paul B. Roth

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HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

The COVID-19 pandemic is surging out of control throughout much of the nation, a consequence of the too-rapid reopening of public spaces and the failure on the part of too many people to follow basic precautions to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus.

New Mexico has not been spared. After our early success in slowing the spread of the disease, the rate of transmission began creeping back up. As of this week, more than 15,000 positive cases had been confirmed in the state, and at least 545 people had died since the inception of the virus.

There is still no vaccine to prevent the disease and too little in the way of effective medical treatments for those who become seriously ill, so the only real strategy at our disposal is to take steps to limit the spread of infection.

You have heard the formula repeated many times: wear a face mask around others, maintain physical distance, wash your hands frequently and stay home as much as possible. These measures are burdensome, but they work. That's why state health officials banned indoor dining, made mask-wearing in public spaces mandatory and imposed a 14-day quarantine on out-of-state visitors.

"COVID fatigue" is a problem. Hearing the same message over and over, we tend to start tuning it out. It's also very hard to remain on high alert all the time. When people are continually exposed to hazards, they may start to relax their vigilance. We have seen evidence of this in our own facilities, which have seen clusters of coronavirus infections transmitted among

coworkers.

This is why we must redouble our efforts to adhere to the prudent behaviors that are proven to not infect others in the workplace, in public spaces and in our personal lives.

This month marks the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Among other things, this landmark legislation prohibited discrimination against people living with disabilities and ensured equal opportunities for employment, public accommodations, transportation, and commercial facilities.

Here at the Health Sciences Center, we share the values enshrined in the ADA, and we are committed to maintaining a diverse, equitable, inclusive and vibrant workplace.

This week's Wellbeing Connection webinar – *Becoming an Active Bystander* – will be presented on Wednesday, July 15, from 12:15 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. by Fabian Armijo, director of the UNM Hospital Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. You can register for the presentation [here](#).

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul B. Roth".

Paul B. Roth, MD, MS
Chancellor for Health Sciences