



Guam Memorial Hospital Authority

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Press Release

(For Immediate Release)

Number of Pediatric Inpatients Decreasing at GMHA

(October 12, 2022; Tamuning, Guam) The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority (GMHA) had been experiencing a higher-than-usual number of pediatric patients admitted to the hospital. The number has been steadily decreasing. The high volume is attributed to the current cold and flu season.

According to Chief of Pediatrics Dr. Akua Agyeman, Guam has seen aggressive cases of human metapneumo, a viral infection that can cause severe pneumonia in children and rhinovirus, the most common viral infection leading to colds. The increased number of pediatric patients is also being experienced throughout the US. Some pediatric patients who have recovered from COVID-19 continue to experience respiratory issues that are affecting the seriousness of seasonal influenza. Patients with other underlying issues, like asthma and allergies, are also susceptible to more serious cases.

GMHA's Pediatric Unit was at maximum capacity over the weekend and added additional beds to the unit. All pediatric patients receive excellent care despite surges in the number of sick children. GMHA has three pediatricians on staff and access to additional physicians via telemedicine. GMHA recently hired an additional pediatrician who will arrive in December and four other pediatricians have accepted offers and are expected to join GMHA soon.

GMHA assures the public that all pediatric inpatients are being well cared for by GMHA's pediatricians and pediatric nursing staff. "GMH has been in the pediatric health service for many years, serving this island faithfully. We continue to prioritize that mission regardless of demand," said Dr. Agyeman, "Our job is to provide excellent care to our patients and we are pleased to have been able to do so during this surge with no morbidity or mortality."

GMHA urges families with young children to stay vigilant and watch out for any difficulties in breathing and to take precautions against colds and flu. This includes eating a healthy diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables which are the best source of Vitamin C. According to the National Institutes of Health, Vitamins C and D, zinc, and Echinacea have evidence-based efficacy in support of the immune defense system.

GMHA also encourages the public to get their flu shot if they are medically eligible. It is also a good idea to continue practicing the COVID-19 protocols of regularly washing your hands, covering your coughs and sneezes, and staying home if you are not feeling well.

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