

STORY FROM THE FRONTLINES

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My experience during the COVID-19 pandemic was two-fold: first, assessing patients who came into the Emergency Room with COVID-like symptoms; and second, administering COVID-19 vaccines in an underserved community.

I was in the middle of my ER rotation during the second wave of the pandemic. I witnessed some patients who ended up in ICU on ventilators, while others succumbed to the disease. The heartbreaking part was that these patients suffered and died alone without any family members close by for support. And sometimes there was more than one family member getting hospitalized for COVID pneumonia on the same day. Every day I was terrified to walk into their rooms to assess because I didn't know if I was going to be exposed to the virus. It was a very challenging and stressful time; however, my anxiety level drastically decreased after taking the vaccine because I knew that I was protected. Now I advocate for my patients (and everyone else) to get vaccinated.

When the City of Detroit needed help for the administration of COVID-19 vaccines, I gladly volunteered and was pleased to represent APRH and the Preventive Medicine Program. I appreciate the City of Detroit Health Department for facilitating vaccine distribution in underserved communities where pharmacies and grocery stores are limited to provide vaccination. The main reason why I joined the Preventive Medicine residency program, with its commitment to public health, is to have a broader reach in communities and minimize health disparities.

This was a great opportunity for me to educate people about the vaccine and ease their fears by addressing their concerns so they can protect themselves and their family members. Also, it was a great feeling to be able to respond to a crucial public health crisis during a global pandemic. It reaffirmed my decision to pursue a career in Preventive Medicine. I learned that administering COVID-19 vaccines is a proactive approach to fighting a global pandemic versus treating patients in ICU.



At the Herman A. Breithaupt Center with Dr. Prince Eubanks, a volunteer physician who is supporting communities disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.