
From: John Pavlick
Sent: 3/4/2023 4:53:42 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Meeting

External Email

To whom it may concern,
The Board of Health is finally holding its first in person meeting in years.
I hope the Boards first item on the agenda is figuring out how to regain the public trust.
I and many others in this once great state have no trust in you or other "leaders" that
abused their power, issued harmful and useless directives, wouldn't listen to opposing
viewpoints, censored information and questions, ridiculed and threatened citizens all the
while claiming to act in the public interest.
Sometimes the greatest evils are committed by people who think they are doing what's
best for everyone in accordance with their own morals.
You have a long way to go to regain our trust. Start now.
Sincerely,
A frustrated citizen of the once great state of Washington.
John Pavlick

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy A13 5G,an AT&T 5G smartphone

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<<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faka.ms%2FAAb9ysg&data=05%7>>

From: Hasan, Faraha
Sent: 3/7/2023 1:36:09 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: WA Board of Health Meeting Comment

External Email

Hello!

I am a resident of Washington not able to attend the WA Board of Health meeting tomorrow. I still wanted to submit a public comment to ask if the board can ask for the state to keep the mask mandate in health care, long-term care, and prisons. The dropping of the mask mandate places immunocompromised, the elderly, and disabled folks at risk. I understand the national health emergency is ending in May and that all other COVID mandates have been dropped in Washington state. However, the mask mandate makes it safer for immunocompromised and disabled folks to seek medical care. We know that COVID continues to spread, cause death, and lead to long-term health issues, especially among folks at more risk. I moved to Washington state last summer and have always felt like this state was a safe place to be for folks at risk for complications from COVID. The dropping of the mask mandate in these places makes me feel disappointed.

Thank you for your time!

All the best,

Faraha Hasan

From: Brooke Stover
Sent: 3/7/2023 5:28:51 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Public Comment: Keep Masks in Health Care!

External Email

Wearing a mask in medical facilities makes essential services and care accessible to all. I am writing to you to keep these safeguards in place across the state of Washington.

I am a proud sixth generation Washingtonian. I am a former public school teacher. I am a mother of young children. I am currently pregnant. I am the daughter of a woman who recently found out she has bicuspid aortic stenosis and is set to undergo open heart surgery next month at UW Montlake. I am fully vaccinated and I believe in science. I know dozens of young people in the region suffering from Long Covid. I care deeply about my family and I care deeply about my community. I am writing to urge you to continue to make masking in healthcare settings mandatory to protect all people of this state. In order to promote equity and long-term health of all people, we must continue to mask in healthcare facilities. I am terrified for my own family, as well as my neighbors, that the health of this region will be drastically altered should the mask mandate be removed.

Our state is, and should continue to be, a leader in protecting its communities. In Washington state, our world-renowned medical facilities, doctors and research institutions should lead the way to be proactive in the fight against COVID. As a multi-generation Seattle area resident who has several medically fragile family members, it terrifies me that in the near future (and in the current state of COVID), masking would not be required in medical settings. We must continue to be a world leader in science, research and basic common sense when it comes to being equitable, treating ALL people with fairness and protection from illness. The basic measure of keeping masking in place in medical settings must be upheld, and I urge you as a mother, daughter, wife, teacher and community member, to continue to protect all Washington residents. Health officials must continue to require masking in all healthcare settings, we must continue to lead by example in this country, and the world and set a high standard of care.

People seek top notch medical care in our region to get well, not acquire more infections. It is a simple ask for everyone to mask in medical settings to protect anyone seeking care: for infants and young children who are too young to mask, for people of all ages who are immunocompromised, who take medicines for organ transplants, who have cancer and are undergoing chemotherapy, who have a history of respiratory issues with viral infections, and for children who have sensory issues that make masking challenging, it is vital that medical offices and hospitals have front-facing staff and patrons protect children at each and every juncture. If our state values equity, diversity, and inclusion, we must compel the places where we bring our most vulnerable for medical care to protect EVERY person. When all health providers and patrons wear high efficiency masks, it protects all our entire community and the future of this state.

This pandemic has taught us that if given the choice, most people will not do the right thing to protect themselves and those in our community. Sick people and vulnerable people are necessarily accessing services in health care settings and the burden should not solve be on them to "protect themselves" or be forced to disclose their personal vulnerability to others to justify (or convince) of additional precautions. COVID is not the only transmissible illness with a risk profile that can be mitigated by simply masking. Washington state must continue to lead the way and must have a higher standard than measuring outcomes by hospitalization and death.

With the uncertainty of the future, the impact on our health care system and the impact of the needs of people with Long Covid, it is essential that we continue to protect all people. I hope and trust that health care leaders across this state will take a proactive approach rather than reactive, with it comes to the health of its residents, young and old.

Failing to require masks in healthcare violates medical ethics principles. Patients seek care to improve their health. Healthcare providers have an ethical responsibility to do no harm and ensure that they do not expose patients to COVID. Please keep our communities safer from COVID-19 by continuing to require and provide high-quality masks for all. Healthcare should be a place of healing where risk of infection is minimized and we must be proactive, not reactive, in protecting all people equitably.

ALL Washington state residents deserve equitable and safe care. Please keep masks in health care!

Best regards,
Brooke Stover

From: Nikkole Hughes
Sent: 3/6/2023 10:24:48 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Written Comment - Please Keep Masks in Healthcare

External Email

Hello,

On March 3rd, the Washington Department of Health announced that it is dropping <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdoh.wa.gov%2Fnewsroom%2Fmasking-requirements-healthcare-long-term-care-and-correctional-facilities-end-april-3&data=05%7C01%7Cwsboh%40sboh.wa.gov%7C5085f465ecd64a1184fc08db1ed4a3e9%7C11d0e21726> the masking requirement for healthcare, long-term care, and correctional facilities effective April 3rd. As a disabled, immunocompromised Washingtonian, I have watched as every sector of society has become inaccessible to me due to the lack of masking requirements in essential spaces. High-quality masks work on an individual basis, but universal masking is more effective at reducing the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID. I cannot afford to get COVID, even once. Now, myself and other high risk Washingtonians—infants, pregnant people, people undergoing chemotherapy, and other immunocompromised and disabled people—will run an even greater risk of contracting COVID in the last space that was supposed to be safe for us to be in: healthcare settings.

I implore you to please, keep masks healthcare settings, long-term care facilities, and correctional facilities. Washington can still be a leader in health equity. We can make our state inclusive to all residents. At the very least, we can protect those most vulnerable from contracting a permanently disabling or potentially deadly virus when they access necessary medical care.

Sincerely,

Nikkole Hughes

(she/her)

Email: nhughesoly@outlook.com <<mailto:nhughesoly@outlook.com>>

Cell: 509-595-2660

From: Holly Blomberg
Sent: 3/7/2023 9:24:39 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: 29E9CFDC-646E-4BCA-B897-AD694A363324

External Email

The reasons provided for rescinding the Secretary of Health's Mask Order
<https://doh.wa.gov/newsroom/masking-requirements-healthcare-long-term-care-and-correctional-facilities-end-april-3>

<<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdoh.wa.gov%2Fnewsroom%2Fmasking-requirements-healthcare-long-term-care-and-correctional-facilities-end-april-3&data=05%7C01%7Cwsboh%40sboh.wa.gov%7Cf2a835265cd54e316c0a08db1f30d2e2%7C11d0e21726>>
do not comport with best practices during the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Just because cases may be "trending downward" at present does not mean that the virus is somehow contained or eradicated. In healthcare, long-term care, & prisons we have vulnerable populations who should be protected.

"Hospitals [and long-term care facilities] have a common law duty to act reasonably. If they unreasonably expose patients to risk, and the patients are harmed as a result, hospitals may be liable for damages."

<https://blog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu/2023/02/20/hospital-liability-covid-infection/>
<<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fblog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu%2Fblog-petrieflom-law-harvard-edu-2023-02-20-hospital-liability-covid-infection%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cwsboh%40sboh.wa.gov%7Cf2a835265cd54e316c0a08db1f30d2e2%7C11d0e21726>>

As for prisons, the state has a heightened legal duty of care to prisoners because these people have been deprived of their individual liberty. Across the country, numerous lawsuits have already been filed based on prisoners' Eighth Amendment rights to be free from cruel and unusual punishment [exposure to the risk of illness and death from COVID-19].

Use of a mask [or preferably a respirator] should be part of a layered mitigation approach. Simply ending this requirement based on case numbers "trending downward" is short-sighted & shows a lack of understanding about the way the virus continues to circulate through our population. Please keep masks in healthcare, long-term care, & prisons in Washington State.

Sincerely,

Holly Blomberg, RN, BSN, JD

From: Tomas Kral
Sent: 3/6/2023 9:03:30 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Thank you UNVAXXED HEROES!

External Email

Just Saying Hi. We're still here. THANK YOU UNVAXXED HEROES!

From: Alex Fay
Sent: 3/7/2023 9:00:20 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Public Comment for March 8 BOH Meeting

External Email

Greetings,

My name is Alex Fay, I'm a resident of Seattle and a registered nurse and wish to submit public comment for the March 8th Board of Health Meeting. I'm writing as both a registered nurse and a healthcare patient to express my extreme frustration with the Washington Department of Health's decision to lift the mask mandate in healthcare facilities, long term care facilities, and jails. I started my nursing career in the midst of the pandemic, and have been exposed to multiple infectious diseases during my career. I have also seen many of my colleagues become infected with COVID and struggle to fully recover and return to work. Research has shown that masks are incredibly effective in reducing the spread of COVID. Furthermore, we are gathering more information that shows that COVID infections - even those that are asymptomatic - can systematically disrupt the human body and cause lasting health conditions and disabilities. The CDC has expanded to include long COVID when certifying COVID-related deaths, and even state that COVID "can have lasting effects on nearly every organ and organ system of the body weeks, months, and potentially years after infection." The science shows that COVID is a serious infection, and we should be taking every step possible, including mask mandates, to reduce infections.

By removing mask mandates, the state is making it clear that they do not value the health and wellness of healthcare workers who have been at the frontlines of this pandemic from the beginning. This decision will also negatively affect patients, who may delay or avoid seeking healthcare due to their increased risk of obtaining COVID. This is also a health equity issue, a subject that DOH discusses on their website. COVID has disproportionately affected people of color and low-income communities, and removing mask mandates in healthcare settings will only worsen already existing health disparities. If DOH is truly dedicated to health equity, they need to reverse this decision and uphold mask mandates in healthcare, jail, and long term care settings, for the safety of both healthcare patients and providers. As a nurse, I will feel increasingly unsafe and unsupported if the mask mandate is lifted, and I am sure there are many other healthcare professionals who feel the same way.

Thank you,
Alex Fay, BSN, RN

From: Laura Kett
Sent: 3/4/2023 6:22:46 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Medical choices

External Email

Please consider in your legislative decisions that not all bodies react the same, that long Covid and Covid vaccine injuries have many of the same symptoms and that we all need to make informed choices for our own bodies. The vaccines do not stop transmission and effectiveness wanes quickly.

Thank you,

Laura Kett

Seattle

Living in the beautiful lands of the Duwamish.

--

Sent from Laura's Cell

From: Sara Antonelli
Sent: 3/7/2023 3:10:19 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Masks in healthcare, correctional, and long term facilities

External Email

Hello,

I am writing to urge the board to do everything they can to ensure the WA department of health order requiring masks in healthcare, correctional, and long term facilities remains. This order allows everyone to safely and equitably access the care they need. Without this order, individual agencies will face political backlash and struggle to enforce requiring masks.

I have a medically complex child who can not mask due to their disability. They rely on everyone around them at their weekly therapy appointments and any in person medical appointments to keep them safe. Our family has worked so hard to keep our particularly vulnerable child safe and healthy. We can only do so much as individuals up against institutions. Please stand with us and make sure they can keep staying safe and healthy for all necessary care.

Thank you for providing leadership in keeping our state healthy. We appreciate all of your work on this issue and all issues.

Sara Baker
Seattle, WA

From: Paul Chapman
Sent: 3/7/2023 1:59:03 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Keep the mask mandate in healthcare

External Email

I'm baffled at how our state public health department decided to ignore science and public health and eliminate a mask mandate in the place we KNOW medically vulnerable people are.

We know masks work. We know Covid is dangerous. Not flu dangerous but "will destroy your health after a few bouts of it, if not before" dangerous.

Even the CDC (quietly) admits this.

So why is the WA Department of Health forcing immunocompromised people into life-threatening situations?

Maintain the mask mandate!

Paul Chapman
Seattle

From: Rose Beverly
Sent: 3/7/2023 12:34:03 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Public Comment - March 8 @ 10:30am

External Email

I demand that the mask mandate in healthcare, long term care, and prisons stay in place. Ending this mandate is a violent decision that puts our families and community members in direct harm. Vaccines do not offer sufficient protection from COVID or curb transmission, they only minimize the risk of hospitalization and death - and there are outcomes far worse than death. Chronically ill, disabled, and elderly people, who need the most care, have already been forced into further isolation due to lifting mask mandates on public transit and in most public settings. I can't even safely shop in a grocery store or pick up medications from a pharmacy. To force me to further risk my life in order to obtain essential medical care puts me in an impossible situation. Not only will this cause more people to die or become permanently disabled by long COVID, it will also disproportionately impact workers - who are already understaffed, overworked, and deserve the right to a safe work environment. Removing masks also violates the ethical responsibility of providers to do no harm. Since 2020, it has been increasingly difficult to find timely, accessible, quality care, and lifting mask requirements will cause our frail healthcare system to collapse entirely at a time when the majority of the population is now immunocompromised due to prior COVID infections. Masks are not a new concept, there is plenty of scientific evidence to substantiate their efficacy in protecting community health - choosing to remain ignorant to this fact is a death sentence. We have already lost over 15,500 Washingtonians to COVID - the only responsible decision, to help prevent the deaths of tens of thousands more, is to sustain the mask mandates in healthcare, long term care, and prisons.

Rose Beverly
Seattle, District 7

From: Alex Fay
Sent: 3/3/2023 5:32:54 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Frustration at Lifting of Mask Mandates

External Email

To the WA State Board of Health,

I'm writing as both a registered nurse and a healthcare patient to express my extreme frustration with the Washington Department of Health's decision to lift the mask mandate in healthcare facilities, long term care facilities, and jails. I started my nursing career in the midst of the pandemic, and have been exposed to multiple infectious diseases during my career, including multiple COVID outbreaks as well as monkeypox. Research has shown that masks are incredibly effective in reducing the spread of COVID. Furthermore, we are gathering more information that shows that COVID infections - even those that are asymptomatic - can systematically disrupt the human body and cause lasting health conditions and disabilities.

By removing mask mandates, the state is making it clear that they do not value the health and wellness of healthcare workers who have been at the frontlines of this pandemic from the beginning. This decision will also negatively affect patients, who may delay or avoid seeking healthcare due to their increased risk of obtaining COVID. It is also very interesting that the DOH discusses health equity on their website, when they are making decisions like these that are both unhealthy and unequitable. COVID has disproportionately affected people of color and low-income communities, and removing mask mandates in healthcare settings will only worsen already existing health disparities. The DOH should reverse this decision and uphold mask mandates in healthcare, jail, and long term care settings, for the safety of both healthcare patients and providers.

Thank you,
Alex Fay, BSN, RN

From: Sara Cohen
Sent: 3/7/2023 9:35:18 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Maintain masks in healthcare

External Email

Hello,

There are many instances where individuals (both healthy as well as those seeking care) must unmask and are therefore reliant on masking of those around them to help protect them from acquiring SARS in the healthcare setting. A few examples include babies and young children, dental and orthodontic care, well visits for routine immunization or medication checks, cancer screenings requiring sedation such as colonoscopy, sick patients vomiting.

No one should risk a nosocomial infection when seeking healthcare.

Sara

From: maia mareš
Sent: 3/7/2023 8:48:06 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Keep Mask Mandate in Healthcare, Long-term Care, and Prison

External Email

Hello Board of Health members,

I am writing to urge you to keep the mask mandate in place in healthcare settings, long-term care, and prisons.

These are places where we must all go to take care of our health, or else places we don't have the ability or freedom to leave. We must take care of ourselves and our community members by ensuring that these spaces continue to require masks.

Removing masks in healthcare puts both patients and healthcare workers at risk, which could place even more strain on the healthcare system amidst severe staffing shortages. Failing to require masks in healthcare or long-term care settings violates medical ethical principles. Patients come to clinics and hospitals to improve their health. Healthcare providers have an ethical responsibility to DO NO HARM and ensure that they do not expose patients to COVID.

Speaking personally, I feel so much more comfortable seeking healthcare when I know that masks will be required. If that were not true, I would have absolutely delayed getting care over the past years, and if the mask requirement in healthcare is removed, I know that I will hardly be the only person who will do so. I urge you to think of the cumulative effect of hundreds of people delaying care because healthcare settings are no longer requiring masks. This will not only worsen the health of individuals, but have long term consequences for our healthcare system.

It is likewise unethical to fail to require masks in prisons, where people do not have a choice to leave in order to avoid exposure. As of March 2023, almost 3,000 people have died in prison from COVID-19, and there have been over 600,000 cases of COVID-19 among people incarcerated in prison. We must continue to protect people serving sentences in prison.

In conclusion, I urge you, as public health officials, to keep our communities safer from COVID-19, by requiring masks in healthcare, long term care, and prisons. The healthcare system should be a place of healing, where the risk of acquiring infections is minimized. We urge you, as stewards of public health, to act in the best interests of the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you,
Maia Mares
WA resident

From: Anitra Gorham
Sent: 3/7/2023 11:52:13 AM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Keep masks in Healthcare Settings!

External Email

I was too late to register for the board of public health meeting but I want to register my comment anyway. I want WA to be a leader in sensible illness management and KEEP MASKS in healthcare settings. This helps protect our most vulnerable populations and the health care workers who serve them.

Anitra Gorham

From: Michaeleen Neher
Sent: 3/7/2023 12:29:10 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Keep Mask Mandate in place

External Email

For the good of the people, please keep mask mandates in place. It's a sure fire way to prevent the spread of air borne illness, and keep citizens safe. Please please please keep the mask mandate going.

Sincerely, Michaeleen Neher

19030 SE 270th Court
Covington, WA 98042

From: Fran Oswald
Sent: 3/4/2023 7:31:28 PM
To: DOH WSBOH
Cc:
Subject: Wed, March 8th meeting

External Email

Dear Board of Health,

I want to express my concern and objection to any mandate of the covid vaccine, especially for including it on the list of vaccines to attend school. The science is out. There are far too many studies proving the dangers, inefficient studies and lack of effectiveness. Our children are NOT guinea pigs. We will not rest while the government for es experimental drugs on our citizens, especially our children! Do not make any motions to bring covid vaccines to the public school entry requirements.

Respectfully and passionately standing for individual choice and body autonomy,
Fran Oswald