A message from Dr. Peter Yellowlees, Chief Wellness Officer

What can history teach us?

So now as UC Davis Health begins encouraging our patients to return, there is a lot to think about. Most of us are anxious to get back to finding some semblance of the way we were. We will do this carefully, cautiously and with an eye on history, taking account of how little we still know about COVID-19. We will do it the best way possible so we can care for our community and for ourselves.

Remember that we are likely going to have COVID-19 around for the next 18 months or so at least, according to most of the expert groups. I recently read a very interesting report projecting three differing future scenarios over the next two years from the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy HERE. This group takes a historical perspective to make future predictions, likening possible outcomes to the viral activity of some of the past influenza pandemics given that other models don’t seem to fit well, in their opinion.

Whichever of the scenarios is right, if any, all three scenarios suggested that we will need to continue with our transmission precautions for a considerable time. We are not even close to being over with COVID-19. So, whatever is going on, and whatever your activities as we open up at work and in the community, please keep up good personal hygiene, social distancing, and encourage and support testing, contact tracing and quarantining as required. Keep safe at work and at home.

If you want more in-depth reading of history can I recommend you look at John Barry’s book “The Great Influenza.” This is a fascinating historical perspective on the 1918 pandemic. While
history buffs will love all the detail of the development of American medicine and modern-day health care, I was fascinated in particular by the last chapter which describes lessons learned from that pandemic that could be applied to future pandemics. Remember this book was first published in 2004, and the predictions that Barry makes are eerily true when we watch what is happening around the U.S. and the world in our current pandemic. We can all learn from history, and this book is an example of something that all of our societal leaders should have read when we first heard of the outbreak in Wuhan.

So, moving back to the present, and how we are going to cope over the next couple of years as COVID-19 unfolds. One of the more surprising things that I have noted, while seeing patients on video over the past several weeks, is how many of them have asked me how I am. A real role reversal if there ever was one, and not something I am used to. I was quite taken aback the first time I was asked this question, but I now know that a lot of patients have been asking their health care providers the same question and have been genuinely worrying about our well-being. So, if our patients are worrying about us, maybe we should take that as a hint and make sure we prioritize our own health and well-being during this prolonged pandemic! What an idea…!

Dr. Katren Tyler is an Emergency Physician, and someone with whom I work closely. She is very committed to improving all of our well-being and has spent a lot of time in recent days putting together an excellent list of COVID-19 specific well-being resources for all of our staff. We have posted these on the new website on “clinician health and well-being” that we have set up for all staff [HERE](#).

Please use and share these links and bookmark this website as we will keep these resources updated. These are all widely available and are not behind firewalls. And you can also [download a printable pdf](#) at the Clinician Health and Well-being website.

Among the many COVID-19 resources Dr. Tyler has found are:

1. California Medical Association. No cost peer coaching for up to 30 days for all healthcare professionals. [https://www.cmadocs.org/wellness/care4caregivers](https://www.cmadocs.org/wellness/care4caregivers)
2. National Academy of Medicine: Resources to Support the Health and Well-Being of Clinicians During COVID-19 [NAM resources](#)
4. Uniformed Services University’s Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress: COVID-19 Pandemic Response Resources [USU CSTS COVID](#)
6. Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education during COVID-19 [ACGME](#) and general [ACGME well-being resources](#)

There are many more resources on the website that you can use to help keep you well. And of course, do not forget all of our many internal resources, including in particular the team at the [Academic and Staff Assistance Program](#).

So, let’s get ourselves ready for the long haul. There is a lot we can learn from history, but there are also many ways of helping our own well-being and that of our families, our friends
and our colleagues.

Thank you so much for all that you do as we move forward together.

Emergency Pavilion
"While my condition ended up being a case of hypochondria, my visit and treatment was pleasant, professional and timely. Thank you."

Infectious Disease ACC
"Best medical experience I have ever had."

UC Davis Medical Group Midtown Pediatrics
"We always leave happy. Thank you for all you do!"

UC Davis Medical Group Natomas Clinic
"Never had a bad experience. The doctor, the nurses and the staff are always very professional and they do their job very well."

Ophthalmology ACC
"Everyone was very helpful, gave me a lot of respect, and made me feel comfortable and no stress, which is amazing. Some other places do make it stressful. Thank you all for making it a good experience."