

February 8, 2021

Leelanau County Board of Commissioners
8527 E. Government Center Dr. #101
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of Munson Healthcare, which serves Leelanau and 23 other counties across northern Michigan, we would like to provide comment regarding the resolution that proposes adopting the Great Barrington Declaration as a strategy for addressing the pandemic.

While it is important that we are sensitive to the very real social and economic impacts of the pandemic, the path to herd immunity suggested by the Great Barrington Declaration does not appropriately account for the long-term health effects of COVID-19 on our population or the potential loss of life.

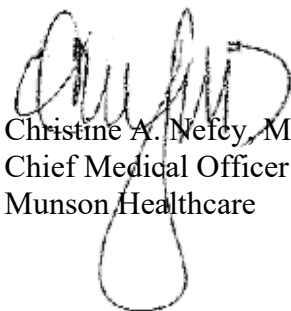
The safest path to herd immunity is through vaccination which is currently underway across our region. While this work continues, it is important to support our local health departments by following the best scientific and epidemiologic principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Our hospitals and healthcare facilities will continue requiring everyone entering or working in our facilities to follow infection prevention protocols including mask-wearing, screenings upon entry, visitor limitations, social distancing and frequent hand washing or sanitizing.

We ask that Michigan residents join us in taking similar necessary steps to prevent the spread of this deadly disease so we can continue to protect our hospital assets and ability to care for our northern Michigan communities. In order to reach herd immunity, we encourage every resident to schedule their COVID-19 vaccine when available to them. Until then, we should not let our guard down and we must continue to protect the most vulnerable members of our population in other ways.

Sincerely,



Edwin A. Ness
President and CEO
Munson Healthcare



Christine A. Nefcy, MD, FAAP
Chief Medical Officer
Munson Healthcare