

Good afternoon My Name is Eduardo Medina. I am a full spectrum family practice physician with a Masters in Public health trained and practicing in MN.

Thank you for the opportunity to add my voice and experience to the many healthcare professionals, public servants, community leaders, patient advocates and common sense observers calling for improvements in how we address the COVID-19 pandemic in MN.

From the outset many of us recognized that the SARS-CoV2 virus does not discriminate between immigrants or those of us born within the borders of the U.S., detained or free of state custody, poor or privileged, with chronic illness or disability or without, or those who must physically show up for work and those who have accommodations. From the outset we have advocated for following the data and the guidance of epidemiologists to prioritize infection control and prevention.

This unfortunately was not done and the end result is that in MN Black, Indigenous, and Latino patients disproportionately contracted and died from COVID 19.

As most recent data reveal profound racial disparities in age-adjusted excess mortality rates for whites are exceeded by 2.8 to 5.3 times for all other racial categories, most severe amongst Black, Latino, and Indigenous Minnesotans.

And to no one's surprise we see these inequities replicated in vaccine distribution. Where the individuals within the age groups and communities with the most disparate COVID mortality have limited access to immunizations.

This legislation I believe would give impetus and guidance to the many organizations and health systems trying to address these disparities.

I would like to leave you with two final impressions:

-An effective COVID pandemic response is an equitable pandemic response. Anything short of this is harmful and puts all of our communities at risk.

And Secondly

-For all off the changes we have been through during this pandemic it is disheartening but illustrative that we have not been able to dismantle the political and societal structures that devalue and disregard the suffering of Black, Indigenous and Latino Minnesotans. Many of whom are my patients, some of whom I have lost.

Thank You