

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:00:04] All right. My next question is what kind of new routines or behaviors that you would not have done before the pandemic have you acquired and will be kind of using going forward?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:00:20] I think one thing that we noticed from a family perspective because of the pandemic was really - we stopped traveling and stopped all these social activities that we normally did. Yeah. While that was a bit of, you know, a little bit disappointing, it created a lot more time for us just as a family. And so, I think last year, we spent so much time together, just my wife and the kids, doing all sorts of outdoor recreational activities, lots of hiking and boating and all sorts of different activities and lots of time together than we normally wouldn't have because we would have so many other outside activities going on. And so, I think that's something that was really beneficial for us as a family and something that we want to try to keep moving forward. I'm trying to kind of create that balance of not overextending ourselves with too many different, you know, trips and visitors and things like that and just allowing plenty of time for us to do stuff as a family.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:01:34] It sounds like a very useful thing going forward.

**Tobe Harberd** [00:01:37] Yeah, yeah. It was good. It was kind of common sense, but it really just makes you stop and put things into perspective. And so, I think that definitely was something positive that came out of it.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:01:52] Thanks. The next question: earlier you mentioned that you were for vaccines. And I'm wondering, have you gotten your vaccine? And then maybe what was your reasoning behind that?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:02:04] Yeah, yeah. So, I certainly am in favor of vaccines. We got vaccines here locally in December of 2020, and so I received my first dose on Christmas Eve and they kind of prioritized it. And then we were able to get it through the hospital. And so, they called all the medical providers in initially. And so, we all raced in to get it. And then I got my second dose several weeks later. And I, you know, certainly in favor of vaccines, you know, all vaccines, the routine ones that we commonly recommend to patients in the way that I look at it, this is no different than that. And so, I think if you have some medicine or a treatment available that can help prevent illness and death and all these other things that are associated with COVID. I think it makes sense to encourage that and utilize it.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:03:15] So, I guess my next question would be how do you navigate those interactions with patients that maybe have different ideas?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:03:23] Yeah. I tried to take a - I try to take a non-biased approach, which sometimes can be difficult to do. But you know, I think any sort of patient interaction or patient visit that we have is a good opportunity to offer the vaccine and just simply talk about the benefits and why we think it is in a patient's best interest to get it. And now that we have it available on a daily basis here in the clinic, I think it's just important that we're continuing to offer it and somebody who may not have got it for one reason or another, they come in for a routine checkup, it's great to be able to offer it and go ahead and get them vaccinated for that visit if they're open to it that day. So, I just keep trying to bring it

up in a nonjudgmental way and offer it to folks and encourage it for anybody that's interested in getting it.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:04:24] That makes sense. My next question is COVID affects everyone and every place differently. Is there any specific challenges that you faced that seemed to be different from what was being represented on a global or national scale?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:04:43] Yeah, I think the difference that we had here in Chelan compared to, you know, what we were seeing more globally or nationally on the news, I think being a rural community, we didn't necessarily see a big impact initially as far as the amount of illness. I think our overall rates in the beginning were relatively low and I think our hospitalization rates were pretty low. But it seemed like as the pandemic continued on that eventually that spread from the more urban areas, the more populated areas and reached out into the rural areas. And we certainly started to see a spike in our numbers a little bit later on in the pandemic. And so, it's a little bit difficult for us because we do have a limited amount of resources. We don't have an ICU [Intensive Care Unit] here. And so, we tried to care for patients as you know, and provide as much care as we safely can. But especially with COVID and the degree of respiratory complications that come along with that, sometimes patients need to be in an ICU or a higher level of care. And so, it was always difficult for us trying to navigate, you know, how long was it safe to keep them here versus when should we look at trying to arrange a transfer? And are there any beds available at the other larger facilities by us? And a lot of times they were on diversion. So, we spent a lot of time calling around to different facilities, trying to line up an ICU bed for these patients, and it felt like - they can be pretty stressful. If you have a really sick patient who really needs to be in an ICU when it's taking a long time to arrange that, it can be stressful situation. So, just trying to kind of do the best that we could to, you know, provide care for all those patients, but then also navigate when they needed to go to a higher level of care.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:06:55] Yeah, I could see where that would be frustrating if you're trying to find the best care and it's not available. So, I guess my next question would be how would you care for yourself and kind of regulate your emotions like going throughout the times when you were challenged with that?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:07:17] Yeah, I mean, I think it's just important to realize that everybody is in the same situation in the sense that everybody else was dealing with the pandemic, as well. And the reason why there weren't beds available was because it was full, you know, those beds were full with patients that were sick and needing ventilators. And so, it wasn't so much a direct frustration towards that specific facility, but just the situation in itself. And so, just keeping that in mind and not taking it out on anybody personally and trying to spread out resources around the best that we could so that we can care for as many patients as possible.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:08:05] That makes sense. I have a couple of more questions here. So, if you can go back in time to your pre-pandemic self, what advice would you give yourself to surviving this new world that we're living in?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:08:24] Probably to be more flexible, be more open to change because you never really know when things are going to get completely turned upside down. And I

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think that's a good quality to have is to be adaptable and be able to kind of roll with new situations and work with the best information that you have, even when you know that that information is pretty limited. And we certainly have gone through a lot in the last year and a half, and I think went through things that we never would have imagined. I never even thought of schools being closed and our kids not going to school. That just have never crossed my mind. And so, you know, these things that we're pretty much just kind of unforeseeable we've all lived through. And so, just looking back at learning how to be adaptable in those situations. But then also, I think just being able to, you know, be flexible with other people's opinions and thoughts and knowing that we all come from different places and have varying opinions and trying to to encourage everyone to it's okay to have different opinions, but we need to be respectful at the same time as well, too. And, you know, treat each other with kindness and respect. And I think it was, the pandemic was certainly hard on a lot of folks in that sense as well, too.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:10:11] Yeah, thank you for sharing that right. My next question is I wonder if you have any meaningful experiences with patients as like during the pandemic that you can remember that either like you really remember or stand out to you or anything like that?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:10:29] Yeah, probably the patient experience that stands out the most was just a month or two ago. So, even though things were improving and vaccines were available, I had a patient that I saw here in clinic to be evaluated for COVID and he had been exposed. His wife was sick and she got exposed at work, and then didn't get very ill from it. But then he ended up getting COVID as well, and he got very sick from it. I just remember seeing him in clinic and he looks pretty sick. Even though his vital signs weren't really that worrisome. They were all relatively normal, but he just he did not look well. And so, we tested. I mean, he tested positive and we sent him to the hospital, to the emergency room for more evaluation and just within one or two hours, he got much more sick and was on oxygen and required more oxygen. So, we ended up admitting him and he stayed with us as long as possible. But he was one of those situations where he eventually needed to go to a facility with an ICU, and there just really weren't any beds available. And it took us I think, you know, at least six, probably somewhere like six to 10 hours in order to arrange transport for him. And fortunately, even though, you know, he was getting more sick, he still did not end up needing intubated or anything like that prior to leaving. But I was kind of surprised just interacting with him and interacting with his spouse that they just really did not have a good understanding of COVID and vaccine and the disease course. And this all seems like a big surprise to them that he could get this ill from COVID. And I found it rather shocking because this was, you know, a good year into the pandemic. And so, it was just - I found it - it was scary because he was so ill and needed a higher level of care. And so, that was stressful, but also thought it was a little bit eye-opening that they didn't really understand it better than what they did. Just because it seemed like everybody was - that's all we've talked about for the last year. And so, I think you just kind of opened my eyes a little bit.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:13:00] Yeah, thank you for sharing that. That is an interesting story. Just because I like I haven't heard of a lot of people who haven't been informed of it. I guess my next question is with that how do you feel about things starting to open up? And like, do you have any concerns or hopes?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:13:25] Yeah, I'm happy that things are starting to open up again, and I'm really happy for our local businesses and restaurants and the local economy that they're able to start operating at back to kind of full capacity again. And so, I'm happy about that. But I don't think that this is completely behind us yet. And I think as long as there's, you know, a good portion of the population that is not vaccinated then we're going to continue to see it. I do worry that now as we open up and masks are no longer required, that we may see a pretty good spike in those numbers and may have to take a pretty big step back. And so, I'm happy that on one sense that things are opening up again but I'm also a little bit worried that we're not completely out of this yet by any means.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:14:35] Would you like to share any possible hopes and fears for the future going forward as we manage COVID-19?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:14:44] You know, I guess my hope is that this is definitely something different that many of us have never lived through before. And so, I hope is that we, you know, we learned from this experience and, you know, it was certainly devastating for many individuals and many families. And so, you know, I hope that we learn from it so that we don't end up having to repeat it again in the future. And yeah, and I guess my fear is that it's not behind us yet that if we open up too early or just start moving forward and returning back to normal and disregarding all the precautions that we took before and that we just end up back in that same situation again, and that makes me pretty apprehensive.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:15:47] Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. So, just before we wrap up, I'm wondering if you have any final reflections or thoughts maybe something that I didn't ask that you're thinking about?

**Tobe Harberd** [00:16:01] Yeah, I guess kind of my final thoughts or reflections, I think it's just it was certainly very - the pandemic was a very eye-opening experience. It was a very stressful experience on many levels and it was very, you know, also very sad for all the lives lost and the families and loved ones loss and family members affected. And so, I think it's just important that we keep that in mind and remember all those that were so negatively impacted by it. And it is nice they were able to open up and move forward but I think it's just really important that we continue to keep those thoughts in our mind.

**Brenda Fleshman** [00:16:56] Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. And with that, I think we can wrap up.

**Tobe Harberd** [00:17:00] Perfect. Thank you.