

Script – Print – OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center Gets COVID vaccine

The first OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center Mission Partners (employees) received COVID-19 vaccines on December 16.

"We feel blessed to be able to provide this protection to our frontline workers, and we look forward to the day when the vaccine is available to everyone so we can move forward together," said OSF Saint Anthony President Paula Carynski.

Kristi Polfliet, RN, Emergency Department, was the first Mission Partner at OSF Saint Anthony to receive the COVID vaccine.

"It's a good step for all the Mission Partners, quite honestly. It's an exciting day for all of us," Polfliet said. "We've been waiting for it for a while. It's an honor to be the first, but it's the first of many."

Polfliet has been a nurse at OSF Saint Anthony for 30 years, but the past year has been the most difficult.

"It's been really challenging. It really has," said Kristi Polfliet, RN, Emergency Department. "It's been unprecedented. It's the word we keep using. We've had to learn to adapt and adjust and think on the fly. Overall, it's been pretty successful but it's been really challenging."

Phyllis Hernandez is a laboratory assistant at OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center. She agrees with Polfliet.

"It's been tough," said Phyllis Hernandez, laboratory assistant, OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center. "It's a huge workload, but every day is a new day. We have learned to overcome and go with the flow. And do better. We do better every day."

Hernandez lost a brother to COVID-19 and has another brother battling the virus.

"It's scary. It's devastating what it's done everywhere," said Phyllis Hernandez, laboratory assistant, OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center. "My hope is we can get a grip and get back to the way things used to be."