



A recorded plea for inmates to get vaccinated earned one retired doctor a badge.
April 2022

Description

A recorded plea for inmates to get vaccinated earned one retired doctor a badge. Hamilton County Sheriff Charmaine McCaffrey said Dr. O'Dell Owens a former Cincinnati Health Commissioner, Coroner and recently retired Interact for Health CEO, created a video that likely saved lives and resulted in improved working conditions for employees.

The sheriff called Owens for help in mid- -January as Covid–19 cases climbed in the tri-state.

“Our jail officers, every day they walk into this institution to face the unknown,” Sheriff McGuffey said, “When they come in, part of that unknown with Covid was, am I going to get sick? Am I going to get Covid even if I am vaccinated?” McGuffey said she felt unvaccinated inmates hesitate to get shots could use a dose of persuasion. Without a script, he recorded a video message.

O'dell Owens MD said, “I thought the message they needed to hear, should not to be judgmental.” Without a script Owens recorded a video message. “You are still human being, no matter where you are. As a human being, you need to care about yourself and about others. So, get the vaccination. When you come back and come home, don't let not having a vaccination keep you from getting a job or visiting the people that you love and haven't seen in a while. Stay healthy. Get the vaccination. Be safe.”

Days later, the jails weekly vaccination totals rose from nine to 34 to 55 and three weeks. Each week since, at least 40 more chose to be vaccinated. Sheriff Charmaine McGuffey said, “He addressed their hope, there are hope for the future, there are hope for their health for the future, their children, their parents, everybody who really does miss them and supports them. Hope is contagious and incarcerated environment, they share that. They share that with each other. That's the part of the video that touched me, and I am certain that was the part of the video that sets it apart from anything else we have shown (to inmates).”

Spencer Konicov (Spring House Lane)

Date Created

April 1, 2022

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