

been holding “upwards” of 30 patients in the emergency room because no hospital beds are available.

Salem Health’s update Tuesday showed 109 COVID patients in the hospital, 87 of them unvaccinated.

“In our community, the silence about being vaccinated is deafening. I don’t know how else to describe it,” Wolfe said.

Salem Health is also seeing an increase in children who have to be hospitalized. Wolfe said the hospital sent two children to specialty hospitals “because they are so sick and beyond

the capability of what we are able to take care of.”

The update came just two days after the Oregon Health Authority announced that 160 Oregon National Guard members would be deployed to Salem Health last Friday to help with “capacity challenges.”

The hospital has also added 150 nurses over the past month and, according to Wolfe, the community hasn’t reached their peak in COVID cases yet.

**News tip? Contact reporter Joey Cappelletti at editor@keizertimes.com or 616-610-3093.**



A nurse cares for a COVID patient in the intensive care unit at Salem Hospital on Friday, Aug. 20. File

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