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It has been a challenging time for all since March 2020. As an Emergency Department (ED) physician, mother, and wife I have seen the toll that this pandemic has taken on all aspects of our lives.

In early January my family and I contracted COVID-19. Being on the other side of this illness was even more terrifying, as I did not know how my mother or young son would fair as this disease is so unpredictable.

Every day in the ED we see patients struggling with not only COVID-19, but other illnesses because many have delayed treatment due to being afraid to seek help. (I can assure you, our hospitals are safe and procedures are in place to ensure this.)

Together with my courageous colleagues we have been working tirelessly to provide patients with the best and most compassionate care possible – despite being both mentally and physically exhausted.

During this time I have also cofounded a few grassroots organizations. The first being Frontline Connect Canada, which came to fruition when stringent visitor policies were implemented for infection control precautions. We collected and setup iPads and phones to help patients and residents of long term care, retirement homes, hospices and hospitals across Ontario virtually connect with their loved ones.

With the donated phones I also set up a program at the hospital called Phone Connect. With the help of new Internal medicine resident Julia Bryson, and our wonderful social workers at HHS, this program provides functioning phones to patients who don't have any means of connecting to hospital and community services upon discharge.

I am also a cofounder of the South Asian COVID Taskforce. Our taskforce formed to help disseminate culturally and linguistically appropriate information to help people further their understanding of the disease, public health precautions and vaccines. We are currently working on a national campaign called “This is our shot” – a collaboration of grassroots organizations to help increase vaccine confidence across all communities.

**Message for the Public:**

As an ED doctor I see firsthand the impact COVID-19 is having on our communities. The vaccine is the safest and most effective way to stop the devastating effects of this disease. I want all Canadians to know that each one of us plays a part in getting through this. We are all in this together. So when it's your turn please get vaccinated to protect yourself and others. This is our shot.