



April 21, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

It still is unknown when we will be able to open our care services and recover from this devastating pandemic. Our approach to care in most of our direct patient contact venues has changed in response to this crisis. Some of those changes, like phone and telemedicine visits, will be here for the foreseeable future. Community members like this option and if we do not offer this convenience for our patients, they will find it elsewhere and we will lose very important market share.

In addition, with so many out of work as well as so many negatively impacted financially by this pandemic, how soon will they choose to receive "elective" health care? My thought is that it will be some time before we will ramp up to the volume we had pre-COVID.

What we learned from this crisis will no doubt help us well into the future. We responded quickly, using technology to continue to deliver care. We implemented all the appropriate Infection Prevention guidelines, keeping everyone safer than before COVID. Basically, with this crisis, we used innovation to respond to the challenges. Our Providers, Clinical Staff, and Management all worked together to figure it out and design the most reasonable approach. This is the formula for long term success. We have so many intelligent, compassionate, energetic and hardworking people in our network. How do we harness all of that power to position Oneida Health for success in what will no doubt be a different and evolving health care environment?

Due to the substantial cost of this pandemic to our Country and our State, please know that monies for the delivery of health care will decrease by large amounts. We will be required (not asked) to do more with less. Consider the impact that will have on our ability to do all that we have been used to doing. Infrastructure in health care will take a big hit. What will happen to the numbers we employ across this state, knowing that health care is a large employer? What about salaries and benefits for all of us?

I am sure that our health care business will be very different a year from now. I believe in 5 years, we will experience a new health care marketplace. One that hopefully is more patient-centric and is much more affordable than today's health care system. Our challenge is to find our niche as we begin the recovery from this world-wide pandemic. Going back to the way we were, is not possible nor realistic. Although I do not have a crystal ball, I have common sense, and the writing is on the wall. Whether in health care, education, transportation, or manufacturing, this pandemic will change things up, referred to as the New Normal.

Together we will succeed. I believe that. What concerns me is getting everyone on the same page. We are not there today and will need to get there quickly, for the benefit of Oneida Health, its employees and providers as well as the community we are here to serve.

I still look forward to our future because of each of you. We need to define that future and the time is now.

With Sincerest Gratitude,



Gene F. Morreale  
President and CEO

P.S. COVID-19 Update:

681 individuals tested, 580 negative, 73 positive and 28 pending with 1 death to date. We have 2 positive inpatients with 5 inpatients pending. Served 15 individuals in our outside testing program yesterday. PPE remains our challenge. We have started using cloth gowns on the ACF fourth floor. As more come in, we will roll those out and take advantage of our excellent laundry service to keep us stocked. Please help and conserve our PPE for future use. Thank you!