



Oneida Health
exceptional care... always

August 11, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

Per notes from the Governor's press conference yesterday, we were on day 163 of the pandemic and we as a state have a .88% infection rate which is the lowest it has ever been. There is much going on which everyone is aware of with the school districts working to set up in person school days for the children in our region. No doubt there will be a number of bumps along the way through this process which I will discuss further later in this message.

Please note the following:

1. PPE- Some very good news in that we received approximately 100 small size 3M N95 masks which with current burn rate will last us a number of weeks. We continue to hunt down any opportunity to purchase N95 masks so that we have a sufficient inventory for the foreseeable future. We also have ordered additional reusable gowns as that process is currently working very well with the Laundry Department laundering the gowns daily. We have significantly reduced our burn rate of the yellow throw away gowns. We are waiting on the delivery of reusable head covers to replace the throw away bouffants. Again, Laundry will help us maintain an adequate inventory so that we have sufficient supplies for the foreseeable future.
2. Testing- The send out tests to Quest continues to be up and down in regards to getting results. We are currently in relatively good shape with a 4 day result turn-around time. The rapid testing is really key to fixing this problem and we have a new contract for the rapid testing starting in September. That new contract will provide us with a good number of test kits each month which will help us meet demand. We have struggled of late getting test kits in because HHS has purchased the majority of the test kits for their stockpile. We did receive a small number in yesterday which will allow us to continue to rapid test admissions as well as symptomatic individuals who require a rapid test result. That is great news as it will help us control our PPE use and better protect our employees providing care to these individuals. Will keep you posted on the rapid testing as we need to make sure we don't run out of those test kits before the new supply comes in in September. Goal again is to use them where appropriate and use the send out for all others putting pressure on Quest to deliver results as timely as possible.
3. Testing Center- We have added 3 per diem employees to staff the testing center allowing us to put the nurses back into patient care areas where they are needed at this time. Two additional staff have been hired to bring the total to 5 that will be able to cover our testing center moving forward. I am happy that we were able to recruit individuals to do this and that will help us with our staffing needs within the hospital proper.
4. Back to School Issues- As referenced earlier, the school districts are putting their plans together on how they will manage during this pandemic. The obvious concern is the safety and well-being of the children attending classes. There is no doubt that the schools will not take any chances

and once a child shows signs of illness whether it be a runny nose or cough, they will be isolated and most probably sent home. That no doubt will create a significant burden for the parents of those children who may be working. I would appreciate very much for those of you who have children in school that you visit with your manager to discuss how you feel you will best be able to respond to these unknown situations when they do occur unexpectedly. Obviously you need to be there for your children and we as a healthcare provider need to ensure we have adequate staff to take care of our patients and residents. Working together, my hope is that we can accomplish both goals.

5. COVID Testing Results- We have tested to date 7,606 individuals, 7,350 negative, 200 positive and we have 52 pending. We remain at 3 hospital deaths. We continue with 0 positive COVID residents in our ECF and we currently have 1 COVID positive inpatient. The good news is that the COVID positive numbers remain low and we are receiving results on a more timely basis.
6. NYS Travel Advisory- Governor Cuomo announced today that Hawaii, South Dakota and the Virgin Islands have been added to the list of states on the travel advisory. Alaska, New Mexico, Ohio and Rhode Island have been removed from the list. As a reminder, anyone traveling to the states on the travel ban list must quarantine for 14 days upon return to NY from that state.

We continue to navigate through this pandemic very well. No doubt we have hit some bumps in the road throughout the process which at times have upset our staff. Believe me that our goal is to provide you the safest work environment possible allowing you to provide exceptional care to those patients and residents who seek help from us. As always, please communicate any concerns or questions you have to my attention or directly to your manager. We are definitely in this together and if we continue on this path, we will be fine.

Thank you all for your continued hard work and dedication to our patients and to Oneida Health.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene F. Morreale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gene F. Morreale