



Oneida Health
exceptional care... always

December 31, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

We had a very successful two days of vaccinating individuals from the Phase IA guideline provided us by the State. We will be offering a similar vaccination program next Tuesday and Wednesday for physician practice staff and other providers along with a continuing list of those who were identified as Phase IA by the DOH. Pretty amazing to me that we had a vacant building just a couple of months ago sitting there and now it is a very busy building offering COVID testing on the lower level and vaccinations on the upper level. I am so proud of the many individuals who worked very hard to put these programs together and make them work. We as an organization have proven once again that we can respond on short notice and be there for our community members when needed.

Please note the following:

1. Employee Vaccine Clinic- On Monday January 4, from 7am-11am we will once again be offering a vaccine opportunity for our staff. All Oneida Health employed staff and members of the Medical Staff are eligible to receive the vaccine through this clinic. No appointment is necessary, so just show up and avail yourself of this opportunity. It will be located in the Library Conference Room on the first floor of the hospital next to the double elevators.
2. Vaccine Adverse Reactions- We have seen very little in regards to reactions or side effects from the Moderna vaccine that we have administered. We are asked by the CDC to report any that are observed here. Therefore, I request that you please contact the Employee Health Office at 315-361-2907 or vmilazzo@oneidahealthcare.org and inform them if you have had any **severe allergic reaction** from the vaccine. **Signs of severe allergic reaction include: difficulty breathing, swelling of your face and throat, fast heartbeat, a severe rash all over your body, dizziness and weakness.**

The following anticipated side effects from the vaccine include:

- injection site reactions (pain, tenderness and/or redness)
- general side effects (i.e. fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, nausea/vomiting and fever)

If you experience any of the **severe allergic reactions** noted above or if any of the anticipated side effects are excessive that requires you seek medical care or affects your normal daily routine, please report those to the Employee Health Office.

3. Declining the Vaccine- I have been asked if an employee/medical staff member refuses the vaccine, can they be terminated/furloughed? The answer is no. I know a number of staff have been waiting to see what happens to those who get the vaccine before receiving it themselves. I do understand that thinking, but know that as the vaccine process is opened up to the public, there may be shortages limiting your ability to receive it when you want it. Also, you will most

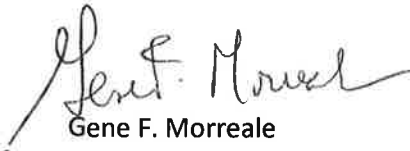
probably have to wait in line with the public to receive. The hospital may no longer have access to the vaccine as the Health Departments are planning to be more involved in the administration program. With that said, please consider receiving it now while it is available here for you.

4. COVID Positives- We currently have 12 COVID positive inpatients. We remain at 7 COVID positive ECF residents while 20 of our residents have recovered from the virus. One has expired. We performed 176 rapid tests yesterday with 22 positive. The majority are from the practices with 2 employees testing positive. We received 93 results from AEGIS, all were ECF and no new positives.

There continues to be considerable concern regarding the post-holiday COVID spike numbers. The post-Thanksgiving spike proved to be challenging for all hospitals in the region and currently the larger hospitals in Syracuse and Utica are full with hundreds of COVID positive patients. We continue to prepare as best we can for the spike so if it does come, we are as ready as possible. I will again restate that we will need help from many in the event of a significant spike. Providers, nurses, CNA's, LPN's, etc. It will have to be an all hands on deck approach to care so that what occurred early on in this pandemic at Elmhurst Hospital downstate does not occur in our region.

I will close today's update with a special Thank you for the staff who are working tonight and tomorrow, the New Year's Day holiday. Thank you once again for being here for our patients and residents. I wish everyone a very Happy New Year and look forward to 2021.

With Sincerest Gratitude,



Gene F. Morreale