



**Oneida Health**  
*exceptional care... always*

December 4, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

As we prepare to receive and administer the COVID 19 Pfizer vaccine, it is important that you give special consideration as to your willingness to accept the vaccine. There is no plan at this time to make this mandatory for you. You will need to sign a declination as is the case with the flu vaccine if you decide against receiving the vaccine. The United Kingdom has already determined that they will provide the vaccine and will be administering it to their population prior to our going live with the process here in the US. I am sure we will learn much from the U.K. that will help us to ensure that we perform appropriately during the initial vaccine as well as the second dose of the vaccine which is administered approximately 21 days after receiving the first dose. The vaccine will be available for our ECF residents and staff and then for hospital personnel. Therefore, I ask once again that you please consider whether you will accept the vaccine so we can begin the process of how to orchestrate the vaccination approach for our organization, which includes working to set up a schedule for vaccination. We are waiting on more information from HHS and the DOH before we ask you to inform us of your decision.

Please note the following:

1. Cloth Masks- There have been several questions regarding whether a cloth mask can be worn over or under a normal ear loop surgical mask. The answer is yes and either way will work. The key is that the surgical mask be worn because of its proven ability to stop the majority of droplets leaving our mouth during conversation.
2. COVID 19 Update- We currently have 6 COVID positive inpatients. We had 2 COVID positive patients discharged and both are doing well. We are now up to 8 hospital deaths due to COVID. The ECF currently has 11 positive residents. Two additional residents from the ECF that are positive remain in our hospital and are part of the 6 I mentioned earlier. They are doing well but we cannot transfer them back until we receive a negative PCR test (per DOH regulation).
3. COVID Results- We received 189 results from Quest. There were 18 positives from that group. The majority were from the practices. We today have 285 tests pending at Quest. The oldest pending test is from November 30. We performed 31 rapid tests yesterday with 2 positive so the number of positives for the day is 20, which is a high number indicating the continued surge in positives in our community.
4. COVID Positive Surge- Dr. Fauci has gone on record that we have not seen the real surge from the Thanksgiving holiday as of yet. He is predicting that will hit soon. As a result of the number of COVID positive admissions in their facility, University Hospital in Syracuse has decided to stop performing elective procedures. That has also occurred in Western NY for the hospitals there by order of the Governor because of the high rate of COVID. We here in Madison County remain below the yellow zone threshold so we will not be stopping electives at this time. Of course, if

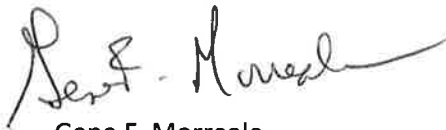
we start to become overwhelmed, that decision will need to be made. Also, the Governor has the authority to stop elective procedures throughout the State which he has not decided to do as of this date. With that said, our focus remains on appropriate PPE usage including consistently wearing that PPE within the organization as well as regular hand washing to protect oneself.

5. PPE- We continue to have success in identifying increased PPE products that will build our inventory and we will soon surpass the 90 day requirement promulgated by the DOH for PPE inventory. Thank you for your continued proper use of this very important resource.

We are monitoring all aspects of this pandemic as closely as we can and will do our best to respond timely. Again, your questions and comments are always welcome.

Thank you all for your continued dedication, hard work and compassion shown each other and our patients and residents.

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