



July 14, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

Since my last update on July 9, a number of items have surfaced that I will touch upon today. Needless to say, our Country remains in crisis due to this pandemic and it will take much longer than anticipated for us to eradicate this threat.

Please be aware of the following:

1. A significant amount of testing has occurred since my last update. I will report a brief summary of each day leading up to today with the number COVID positives. On 7/11 we had 3 positive tests for inpatients. These were the patients who were admitted from the Lutheran home who were positive on admission. It is with great sadness I report that 2 of the 3 have since expired in our hospital. The third patient remains positive and appears to be recovering. As has been reported, this is a very difficult disease process for the elderly to overcome. On 7/12 we received 2 positives. One from our practices and 1 from an ECF per diem staff member. On 7/13 we received one positive from the practices. For 7/14 we have tested a total of 5616 individuals, 5227 negative, 171 positives with 217 pending. The pending number is alarming and is a result of national labs having difficulty keeping up with test turnaround time. Quest, who is our reference lab, is doing all they can at this time to meet high demand and provide a timely, accurate result. In the meantime, we are using our in house rapid testing for inpatients as well as scheduled surgery cases so as not to delay treatment.
2. Questions have surfaced regarding masking in our facilities. The requirement is that all providers and staff wear a mask upon entering and leaving our facilities. Please do not go to your work area without a mask on. This is both a state requirement and an infection prevention guideline that must be adhered to by all of us. If we work together to strictly follow our prevention guidelines for the spread of this virus, we will continue to be successful. It takes very little to create a significant problem for your co-workers and our patients/residents. Please continue to be the solution and not the problem.
3. PPE inventory remains a work in progress. No ordered N95 masks have been received and we are not aware of a firm delivery date. Promises continue to be made, but....Gloves are turning out to be a problem for us as we are struggling to get sufficient numbers in and usage remains high. We received a quote from a vendor for \$.23 per glove. With our usage of 9000 gloves per day, that equates to over \$2000 per day for gloves. We will continue to do our very best, including having to pay exorbitant prices to maintain an adequate inventory of essential PPE. Your continued assistance in helping conserve is necessary and greatly appreciated.
4. We have received a good response from individuals applying for testing circle employment. We are reviewing applicants and the plan is to bring on a number of per diem staff to cover the circle testing, 6 days per week, as soon as possible.

5. As reported in item 1, we now have had 3 hospital deaths due to COVID 19 since Mid-March. Although we had one per diem employee test positive in the ECF, we continue as of this date with 0 residents being COVID positive. Our goal is to continue with that outcome.
6. The State has issued new guidelines for visitors in the ECF. We are currently putting our visitation plan together to submit to the state. Due to the COVID positive employee, we cannot allow visitors inside the ECF until 28 days has elapsed since the last positive of staff or residents in the ECF. That will mean sometime mid-August. In the meantime, window visitation is occurring along with IPad visitation for our residents.

I will close with an important reminder. Strictly adhere to the PPE guidelines for your and our patients protection. Help clean high touch surfaces throughout your work day based upon traffic in your respective area. Teamwork and cooperation is key to our continued success.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

Gene F. Morreale
President and CEO