



Oneida Health
exceptional care... always

July 28, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

In yesterday's Governor's conference call, he shared some statistics that I thought I would share with you today in case you have not seen his updates. We are in day 149 of the pandemic. NYS did 57,000 tests yesterday with 608 positive which is around 1%. 11 New Yorkers had died yesterday as a result of COVID. 642 individuals hospitalized yesterday throughout the state. He went on to comment that we will not be out of the woods so to speak with this pandemic until it is contained across the country due to travel for the most part. Some good news from his update is that 20 companies have been identified to increase manufacturing of PPE and will make it available to healthcare facilities as needed. He noted the high pricing of PPE being an issue for all of us these days.

With the above in mind, please note the following:

1. PPE- We have received gloves in a limited amount which will definitely help. We have not received any N95 masks yet and are still looking to early August to receive a shipment. We are evaluating the purchase of cloth shoe covers versus the throw-away covers as no doubt those throw-aways will become a shortage material in the not too distant future. At least with the cloth shoe covers, we can launder them and have them available for staff to use. Please continue to help with conservation efforts of our PPE. We will get through this with your continued assistance.
2. Travel Guidelines- Three new states have been added to the list of travel restricted states including Illinois, Kentucky and Minnesota. Washington DC and Puerto Rico have also been added to the list of travel restrictions. The guidelines for those returning from traveling in those states has been updated. Those that traveled to restricted states must be tested within 24 hours of re-entering NYS. Only one test is required unless that test is positive. Please note these changes to the guidelines and if you plan on traveling to one of the states, make plans to contact the Employee Health office and schedule your rapid test upon your return.
3. ECF Visitor Plan- The plan to allow visitors starting August 14 is almost complete. There are definitely restrictions that will be implemented similar to hospital restrictions today. The hours will be limited as will the number of visitors allowed as well as the locations for visitation. Once the plan has been finalized, it will be shared with all so that you are aware of current visitors for long term care residents. Our goal is to permit the visitations in a safe and appropriate way.
4. In regards to the ECF Visitor Plan, we will need some assistance from part time and per diem staff who are willing to provide some hours of coverage for the ECF to help with the visitation process. Much of the activity required is to be available to watch over our residents and visitors and make sure they are following the guidelines as well as help transport the residents to and from their room for the visitation. If you are interested in volunteering some hours during the

week or on weekends, please contact Andrea Narrow with your name and we will then notify you of what hours are available for you to sign up for.

5. This week we would normally be preparing for our annual summer picnic. Due to our current situation, we will not be holding the picnic this year. This pandemic had also impacted our Boxing Hall of Fame picnic which the residents and staff always look forward to each year. Members of the Senior Leadership team are looking forward to the day when we can celebrate our organization and all of our staff for the many accomplishments we have achieved not only during this pandemic but over the year. Once we receive the green light, we will develop a way to further say thank you to all of our employees and medical staff.
6. The COVID 7/28 report includes the fact that we have tested 6,667 individuals, 6,424 (96.3%) negative, 183 (2.7%) positive with 58 pending. We continue with a total of 3 hospital deaths. Our percentage positive is higher than what the state is experiencing as many of our tests are provided to symptomatic patients. The total % does not equal 100% as there are 58 pending results in the total tested number. We received 69 results yesterday and all were negative other than 1 from our practice. We currently have 2 positive inpatients and remain COVID free among our residents in the ECF.
7. As a reminder, masks are to be worn upon entering the workplace as well as when leaving work. Failure to wear your face masks in a health care facility is a violation of regulation which we need to avoid. Your cooperation is needed.
8. No doubt COVID 19 has taken a toll on you as well as members of your family. With no clear end in sight, it is very challenging to get up and face each day with so many unknowns as you go through your work day. Going home in the past used to be the reprieve and now even that creates some challenges for us. We do have the Employee Resource page on our intranet which we are working to keep current and some new items have been added. Please take the time to review that page. Obviously self-care such as getting enough sleep, eating healthy, exercising and doing some meditation will positively impact you. Keeping things positive whenever possible will also not only help yourself, but will help your co-workers as you go through each day. It is understood that these are challenging times for all of us and some of us handle it better than others. The fact of the matter is we need to support each other and work to get through this every day until hopefully one day this pandemic will be a thing of the past. Again, please do not hesitate to access the resource page on the intranet and the services that are readily available if needed.

The future remains cloudy in regards to the end of this pandemic. We of course need to continue with our efforts to protect ourselves, our co-workers and our patients and residents as it is the right thing to do. Please know that all that you are doing each day keeping this organization moving forward is greatly appreciated.

As always, with Sincerest Gratitude,



Gene F. Morreale