



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

June 23, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

If you have been following what is happening nationwide with COVID you noted the increase in COVID cases now in 26 states. This is very concerning as those states have gone through the opening phases that NYS is going through and are seeing a significant impact as a result. I will comment more on this below but want to ensure that none of us lets our guard down at this time as it is still not safe. As healthcare staff and providers, our obligation remains to stay healthy so that we are able to care for our patients or if not a direct care provider, provide the support necessary so that patients/residents can be well cared for.

Please note the following updates:

1. **Employees self-reporting exposure-** We have had a good number of employees of late self-report to the Employee Health Office that they were exposed outside of work to COVID positive individuals. This was not intentional on the part of those employees but rather unknowingly being exposed and finding out after the fact. For example, one employee's good friend had emergency surgery and was tested and was found to be COVID positive. That employee was exposed to that friend who was asymptomatic and now finds that he/she has to be concerned and aware that he/she could be COVID positive. The asymptomatic nature of this virus is very concerning and as a result, we need to continue to practice social isolation and when that is not possible ensure that we are protecting ourselves with at minimum a facemask. In the café today, I personally noticed 4 staff sitting around one of the larger tables which is now designed for maximum 3 people, none of them wearing a mask. Obviously it is difficult to wear a mask when you are eating, but again the large table is designed for 3 to sit at, not 4. With 4, the isolation required distance is not being adhered to.
2. **Masks-** I rounded on Friday throughout most of the ACF and the first floor of the ECF. For the most part everything was in good order with the exception of a number of staff who were not wearing a mask while at their work station. This is in direct violation of State and Federal regulation regarding wearing a mask in a healthcare facility. Although I do understand the difficulty of wearing a mask at all times at work, the requirement is that we do so. The only exception is in private offices where wearing a mask is not required unless others populate that office with you. So I remind you once again, we have an obligation to each other as well as our patients to follow the guidelines for PPE, handwashing and keeping work areas clean throughout the day. I need all of your attention to this as we continue to navigate through this very difficult pandemic.
3. **PPE-** The good news is that our PPE inventory remains solid. The continued concern is the lack of N95 masks. This has been raised again by a number of hospitals having difficulty securing certain sizes of N95 masks. Requests are being made to Albany as well as Washington to ensure

adequate manufacturing of masks to support us during what will probably be a challenging Flu season and a second round of COVID.

4. Visitor Response Plan- The newly revised Visitor Response Plan began yesterday at 1:00 and with the support of our security officers, the first day went very, very well. I have not heard any feedback from the hospital floors where visitors were allowed to enter to see if there were any issues. Again, please review the visitor plan to ensure you are familiar with it so that you can help guide visitors during their time in our facility.
5. Joint Commission- We are due for a Joint Commission survey which is a 4 day survey. We learned yesterday in a webinar that the Joint Commission will be starting up the surveys once again and will look to areas with low COVID volume. We are such an area at least at this time. Therefore, we are preparing internally on the ACF side as well as our clinics for a potential visit over the next several months. Expect to see more regarding Joint Commission readiness as we move through the summer months.
6. COVID Results- The following are the dates and COVID test results for each of those dates just to keep you posted on how we are progressing.

On June 19, 3795 individuals tested, 3530 negative and 151 positive with 114 pending. We received 62 results as follows: Elective Procedure 43/0, Inpatient testing 2/0, ED 5/0, Practices 7/0, and ECF staff 3/0. On this date we had 1 positive COVID patient on Med/Surg.

On June 20, 3895 individuals tested, 3782 negative and 153 positive with 60 pending. We received 91 results as follows: Elective Procedure 21/0, Inpatient testing 15/0, ED 2/1, Practices 6/1, and ECF staff 45/0. On this date we had 0 positive COVID inpatients.

On June 21, 4074 individuals tested, 3817 negative and 153 positive with 104 pending. We received 35 results as follows: Elective Procedure 18/0, Inpatient testing 7/0, ED 4/0, Practices 5/0, and ECF staff 0/0. On this date we had 0 positive COVID inpatients.

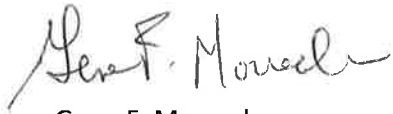
On June 22, 4088 individuals tested, 3931 negative and 153 positive with 4 pending. We received 114 results as follows: Elective Procedure 75/0, Inpatient testing 8/0, ED 5/0, Practices 12/0, ECF staff 13/0 and Employee Health 1/0. On this date we had 0 positive COVID inpatients.

On June 23, 4144 individuals tested, 3946 negative and 153 positive with 45 pending. We received 15 results as follows: Elective Procedure 0/0, Inpatient testing 10/0, and ED 5/0. No positive inpatients on this date.

I will close today's update with once again a reminder of how important it is that we hold the line in following guidelines 100% of the time. We need to understand that as we venture out, which obviously we are all doing more of these days, the opportunity for exposure increases. Ensuring that you self-report to the Employee Health Office is very important so that we can provide you with adequate direction on next steps. With the rapid testing around, we will be able to quickly determine whether you are positive or not.

Thank you all for continuing to do the wonderful job you are doing caring for our patients and residents or providing that support necessary to our staff who are caring for patients and residents. It is a team effort and I'm really proud to be a part of this team.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene F. Morreale". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gene F. Morreale