



March 19, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

The pandemic we are battling continues to gain momentum as seen in the growth of COVID-19 positive individuals. Our regions volume of positive cases remains low and with that said, we are using this time to continue to ready for whatever comes our way.

Please note the following updates:

1. It does not appear that an offsite, drive through testing program will be implemented in Madison County at this time. We do not have an adequate supply of testing materials to support more widespread testing. This remains our goal and when the supply of testing materials becomes available, we will roll this out. In the meantime, our current supply will be used to support our organizations network of service. A decentralized approach remains our practice.
2. Staff who feel they have been exposed to COVID-19, unless seriously ill, should not go to the Emergency Department for evaluation or testing. Please contact your primary care provider first for direction or call the regional hotline at 315-464-3979. We must work together to limit the ED visits to those with serious illness where immediate care is required.
3. The majority of our practices are seeing patients with respiratory symptoms and a small number are being tested for COVID-19, based upon the clinical assessments.
4. PPE supplies continue to diminish. I again request that you follow current standard precautions and only use PPE when the situation requires it. We are following CDC guidelines in this regard and in the event they change, you will be immediately informed.

For those hospitals where COVID-19 patients are in high numbers, one of their biggest challenges is having an adequate supply of PPE. You all need to be part of this conservation initiative. If you have questions about when to utilize PPE, discuss with your manager, nursing supervisor or our Infection Control team. Please, be part of the solution on this important initiative so that we will have the necessary supplies when needed for staff protection.

5. Testing for the virus is currently sent out to Quest Labs. The current turnaround time (TAT) is 3-5 days. They are working on a rapid testing process which will dramatically reduce the TAT. We also will look to bring this testing in house when released for that purpose. We are readying for that in our Laboratory.
6. I am pleased to report that our medical staff members are using Go To Meeting technology to enhance communication. In addition, our telehealth patient visit process is operational and

working very well. This will be expanded upon to afford easier access to our physicians and physician extenders.

7. We need you, all of you who are not ill, to do whatever you can to come to work. This will allow us to provide cross training education for staff in those areas where volume has decreased and will probably stay low. Those staff will then be a valuable resource for the rest of the organization where we may see spikes in volume or where actual staff illness has impacted staffing ability. As health care workers, we are the safety net for our community members. Without you, we will not be able to appropriately respond when the need arises.
8. I am again attaching the President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America. Please review it in its entirety and adhere to all of the guidelines. If you are a person with an underlying health condition that can put you at increased risk, stay home and away from people. Please practice social isolation and social distancing (i.e. 6 feet). We can keep each other safe by following these guidelines.

I again congratulate and thank you for helping our organization do the important care we are here for. The challenge will increase over the next week or two. Working together, following our guidelines, will not only keep us as safe as possible, it will permit us to continue our care mission.

Sincerely,



Gene F. Morreale
President and CEO