



March 21, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

We as an organization are continuing our mission of providing quality care to our community members. We are not closing our outpatient services at this time as in my opinion, we would be abandoning those who rely on us in times like this. Rather than close, we are implementing technology solutions that can be utilized in primary and specialty care to allow our community members access to health care. For those that must come in to the practice to be seen, we have implemented measures to protect the patient as well as our staff.

We will continue to look for ways to provide care while at the same time, minimizing risk of infection to our staff. We are adhering to all Federal and State requirements as well as searching the internet to find best practices for the provision of care in this crisis with the goal of protecting you and our patients, while continuing to fulfill our health care mission.

Please note the following updates:

1. The N.Y. State Health Commissioner has informed us that we can no longer perform elective surgery. The last day of elective surgery (including endoscopy) will be Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. No re-start date has been provided. This will most probably last for several months or until the COVID 19 threat is significantly reduced. This impact elective surgery only. We are prepared to and will safely provide urgent/emergent surgery as needed.
2. Our Obstetrical Service will continue to provide necessary Obstetrical care including C-sections as well as urgent/emergent GYN care.
3. We continue to develop our surge response plan. We are required by the Department of Health to submit that plan which must include increasing our inpatient bed capacity by 50% as well as a staffing plan to cover those beds if a surge in our area occurs.
4. As of this morning, our network does not have any COVID 19 positive patients. We continue to screen those who are ill and concerned that they may be infected and we have tested a small number who meet the criteria for testing. All tests received back have been negative up to this point in time. Complicating this process is the fact that the flu continues to be prevalent in our region. Both the flu and COVID 19 have similar symptoms.
5. I want to again remind you of the importance of social isolation and social distancing. Isolation is simply that. Remain isolated at home including keeping your children isolated. It is not a school break. Distancing is keeping 6 feet away from others. This means in stores, in our café or break rooms while on break and also throughout the work day. There is science behind the 6 feet distance, so please adhere to it at all times. Protect yourself.
6. We are finalizing plans to open up a drive through testing center which we will be opening this coming week. This is in partnership with the Madison County Health Department. What this will do is allow our practices to order testing for their patients (via phone or telehealth) who meet criteria and ask them to make an appointment for a drive through swab test. This process will

further help reduce patient traffic in our offices for this patient population. We do not have a high number of swabs/vials, so we will be limiting this service to patients in our network including the Quick Care service. More specifics will be provided in a follow-up email update.

7. We are also developing plans for a walk in testing center that will be opened when/if a surge in illness occurs. We are readying this on campus space so that it can go live quickly, again, if necessary.
8. Staff and volunteers are working on the making of protective face shields and masks. We are following how others in our industry are approaching this and we will have in our internal supply chain in the event we run out of that type of PPE.

I will close this update with once again thanking you for being at work, meeting the needs of our patients and your co-workers and for being the responsive staff needed in this crisis. We have done well to date because of you. You continue to Amaze!

With Sincerest Gratitude,

Gene F. Morreale  
President and CEO