



March 29, 2020

Dear Fellow Employee,

We continue to provide care in all settings and have done so with significant success due to the cooperation from our providers and staff. Please accept my sincerest appreciation for being there when our patients, residents, community members and co-workers need us most.

Please note the following updates:

1. There is now a requirement that all members of our organization wear a mask while at work, including patients (excludes residents in the ECF). If a patient cannot wear a mask due to medical care issues, that is acceptable.
2. We are using PPE at a high rate throughout our organization which will be problematic for all of us. We have issued guidelines on when PPE is required including what level of PPE to use. It is so important that we all follow the guidelines for PPE so that we do not run out. Please ask a co-worker, your manager, infection control, etc. if you are not sure of the guidelines to follow as they have been updated periodically, based upon information received from Federal/State governments.
3. There are two attachments included with this e-mail. One titled "Further Mask Guidance and Routine Infection Control Practices" which includes a you tube video on proper masking technique. This is for everyone to watch. The Second attachment titled "Updated Infection Control Guidance 3/27" which includes videos on Donning and Doffing techniques. These videos are designed for staff in care areas. Please review these regularly as by following these you will better protect yourself and help us control PPE use.
4. The NY State DOH has issued new guidance on staff who may have been exposed to COVID -19 with no current symptoms and those that were COVID-19 positive, outline when those persons can work. I have asked Kelly Woodcock, our infection control nurse to distribute this information throughout the organization including our desire for you to continue to notify the Health Office if you have been exposed or had been positive. Symptom monitoring for all O.H. members is required and needs to be documented twice daily.
5. I am pleased to report that we will soon have in lab capability to perform a rapid COVID-19 test which will provide positive results of infection within 5 minutes and negative infection results within 13 minutes. This in my opinion is a game changer to help control the spread of this virus. Once we are operational with this testing, we will communicate that. I want to congratulate our laboratory staff who have been working so hard to ensure that lab results are available to us asap. They have also prepared each specimen to be sent out to be tested without fail. Please recognize how important these "behind the scenes" staff are to our ability to care for our patients. Not just at this time of crisis, but always, 24/7!
6. As of this morning, we have no COVID-19 inpatients or COVID-19 positive ECF residents. We have one inpatient pending test result. There were 2 more COVID-19 positive outpatient test results for a total to date of 16 from our network. There remains 31 test results outstanding.

I ask that you continue to read and share these updates as it is a way to keep communication accurate and dispel harmful rumors. Question and concerns are always welcome ([anarrow@oneidahealthcare.org](mailto:anarrow@oneidahealthcare.org)). We will continue to work constantly to secure PPE and again stress the importance of following the PPE guidelines. It is so important that we do this now.

Thank you all so much for your dedication and caring.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

Gene F. Morreale  
President and CEO