



March 30, 2021

Dear Fellow Employees,

Although the regularity of my updates has decreased, I want to ensure that I continue to reach out to you from time to time regarding what is occurring within our region. As many of you know, there is media talk regarding a new surge in COVID cases nationwide and some of the blame is going towards COVID variant viruses. To combat this, it appears that the Federal and State governments are loosening up eligibility for the vaccine as the vaccines have proven effective to date versus the COVID variants seen in our area.

Please note the following:

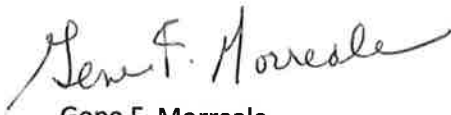
1. COVID Update- We currently have 1 COVID positive inpatient and we remain at 0 COVID positive ECF residents which is great. We performed over 200 tests yesterday, the majority being rapid tests with 1 positive from our practices. The rest were all negative. We only have 24 pending tests today as Quest Laboratory who we are now using for our PCR testing is turning around tests rather quickly which has been great. Our testing center remains open as those patients presenting for elective procedures are still required to be tested.
2. Madison County- In a call with the Madison County Health Department, it was reported that there are 83 active COVID positive cases in the County. They report averaging 30 new positives per day and saw 10 positives this morning. A point of reference is that two weeks ago there were only 41 active COVID positive cases in the County and this is reflective of what I said earlier regarding an uptick in COVID positive cases. Approximately 21,000 of the Madison County residents (population 75,000) have had at least one dose of the vaccine. This means that there is still a significant number needing to be vaccinated and with the reduction on limitations to be eligible for the vaccine, that number should rise significantly. The Madison County Health Department website has clinics for vaccinations this week as well as a drive through in Wampsville on Saturday. Appointments are available through that website.
3. Patient Care Volume- The hospital of late has seen a significant increase in higher acuity patients presenting for care. Although it is difficult to support this through study, it appears that individuals are waiting longer before seeking care and as a result, presenting to us in a more acute stage of the illness. As a result, I plan on sending the attached community update out to the community encouraging individuals to seek care preferably starting with their primary care provider. I reference a NY Times article regarding individuals presenting with later stage cancer appears to be a trend happening throughout the country. Much of that late stage diagnosis could be avoided through early screening which Oneida Health offers to its community members.
4. Visitor Response Plan- The Visitor Response Plan for the ECF has been updated to reflect less stringent visitor requirements. Although limitations remain, we are able to allow visitors to

come in and visit face to face with loved ones. For those that have been vaccinated, both visitor and resident, there is the ability for touching which has been forbidden up to this point. This is all good news in that many of the residents although supported by our staff, miss close contact with their loved ones. The Visitor Response Plan is posted on our website for both the hospital and the ECF for all to view. The goal still remains to protect our residents, our patients and our staff from unnecessary exposure to this virus. Therefore, PPE requirements remain intact as well as the focus on hand washing.

I do want to recognize our staff throughout the organization for stepping up and meeting the higher demand that we are seeing in many of our programs. The OR in particular worked well into the night last night and did not finish its last case until approximately 11:30pm. As you can imagine, that is a long, difficult day for all involved in the care of those patients. Much of the demand was due to emergent add-ons that presented for care.

Again, thank you to all of our staff and all of our providers for continuing to perform at a high level.

With Sincerest Gratitude

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

Gene F. Morreale