



May 11, 2021

Dear Fellow Employees,

A good amount of positive news on the pandemic front which I will share in this update. I will also share a couple of other items that are a result of our dealing with the pandemic over the past 15 months.

Please note the following:

1. COVID Positivity Rate- It is reported that NYS's COVID positivity rate is the lowest since October 28, marking 34 days straight of decline. The statewide 7 day average positivity rate fell to 1.45% and on Saturday the positivity rate was 1.3%. Hospitalizations were at the lowest level since late November.
2. COVID Positives- The good news is that we have 0 COVID positive inpatients and remain at 0 COVID positive ECF residents. Yesterday we tested 224 individuals with 2 positives, both from our practices. We also did 105 Abbott BNx tests with 0 positives. We remain at 20 deaths overall since the start of the pandemic.
3. Visitor Screening- In spite of the lower numbers of COVID positives, we are still required to conduct screenings for individuals presenting for care whether at the practices or at the hospital as well as visitors who are coming to any of our facilities. Attached to today's update is the revised visitor screening form. The significant change is in item #1 where we are now required to rule out anyone visiting a region where the Ebola virus disease is present. Each area of our organization should have signage regarding travel as it relates to Ebola. In the event that you do not, please reach out to the Infection Control office and they can provide you with that information. Please continue to screen individuals and utilize the attached document right away. Thank you for this.
4. Staffing- As many of you are aware, we have a number of vacant positions throughout our network of care which is impacting our ability to staff to the level that we are accustomed. If you have been reading or listening to the media of late, you will note that this vacancy situation is not a problem just at Oneida Health, it is a problem encountered by the majority of businesses throughout this country. We as an organization are continuing to hold job fairs to attract individuals, we have positions posted online and on social media and we also have sign on bonuses in place for many positions. We are evaluating market rates to ensure that our salary and benefit program are competitive. Finally, we are looking into the potential to set up a referral bonus program for our employees who refer candidates that are eventually hired. That is being developed and if we can make it work financially, we will share that with all of you soon. Hiring new staff as well as retaining current staff is of utmost importance.

This week we are celebrating Healthcare Week with a number of events. I am hoping that you are able to participate and enjoy this week's activities. Our purpose in providing these types of activities is to simply say thank you and recognize you for all you have done for our community members and for this organization in providing exceptional care.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Gene F. Morreale'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Gene F. Morreale