



November 13, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

We continue to deal with positive COVID cases in higher numbers than what we are used to. I reported in yesterday's update the 12 positives we had. In regards to today, we did 98 rapid tests with 5 new positives. 2 were seen in the ED, 2 from our practices and 1 was an employee who was exposed outside of work. The good news is that we have received 115 results from Quest, a number of them being our ECF employees and all were negative. We still have 158 tests outstanding from Quest. We look forward to getting those results.

Immediately below this paragraph is a conclusion from a study performed with the assistance of the CDC. It outlines the importance of wearing a mask based upon study results. As you know, COVID infection is transmitted predominately by respiratory droplets generated when people cough, sneeze, sing, talk and breathe. The CDC recommends community use of masks, specifically non-valved multi-layer cloth masks, to prevent transmission of the COVID virus. Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus laden droplets which is essentially relevant for asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic infected wearers who feel well and may be unaware of their infectiousness to others and who are estimated to account for more than 50% of the transmissions of the virus. Masks also help reduce inhalation of these droplets by the wearer. The CDC goes on to state that the community benefit of masking for COVID control is due to the combination of these effects with individual prevention benefit increasing with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly.

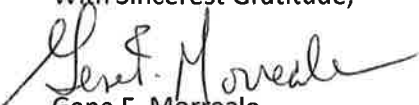
The following for those of you that are interested are the conclusions reached by the study:

Experimental and epidemiological data support community masking to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2. The prevention benefit of masking is derived from the combination of source control and personal protection for the mask wearer. The relationship between source control and personal protection is likely complementary and possibly synergistic¹⁴, so that individual benefit increases with increasing community mask use. Further research is needed to expand the evidence base for the protective effect of cloth masks and in particular to identify the combinations of materials that maximize both their blocking and filtering effectiveness, as well as fit, comfort, durability, and consumer appeal. Adopting universal masking policies can help avert future lockdowns, especially if combined with other non-pharmaceutical interventions such as social distancing, hand hygiene, and adequate ventilation.

With the above noted evidence, please do all you can to protect yourself and again our co-workers, patients and residents by wearing your mask appropriately. As noted in the above conclusion, other interventions include social distancing, hand hygiene and adequate ventilation.

For those of you who are off this weekend, I hope you have a restful and enjoyable weekend. For those of you who are working this weekend, thank you for being here for our patients and residents.

With Sincerest Gratitude,



Gene F. Morreale