



November 25, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

The Thanksgiving holiday is soon upon us and the COVID related concerns are well known as communicated by the CDC as well as our Governor. I have nothing more to add other than I hope that you have a very safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Please note the following:

1. ECF- The guidelines distributed by the DOH that would allow residents to leave the facility for Thanksgiving are so stringent that we have strongly discouraged any residents from leaving the facility. There is a requirement for testing before returning as well as quarantine of the resident for a period of time which although is probably a safe way of handling the situation, it would be very difficult on the residents. We are planning a wonderful Thanksgiving meal for the residents and as I stated yesterday, our window visit hut is now operational and heated and we are encouraging family members to visit that way or use technology such as iPads and smartphones.
2. COVID Testing Results- We performed 35 rapid tests yesterday with 0 positive. We received 157 results from Quest and 15 of those were positive while 2 are inconclusive and need to be repeated. We now have 523 tests pending with Quest dating back 6 days. We remain with 3 COVID positive inpatients. Our mortality rate for COVID in the hospital is 5 individuals. As you have most probably seen in the news, Oneida County has had a significant spike and Onondaga County has now moved into the orange zone. The increase in infections surrounds us and if our number of infections continues to increase, we will be eligible to be placed in the yellow zone soon.
3. ECF COVID- We have our first 2 cases of COVID positive residents. This is very concerning because of the ease of transmission to other residents. We are currently rapid testing all staff and residents on the unit where the 2 positive residents reside.
4. PPE- We continue to do relatively well with PPE with the exception of maintaining a 90 day supply of gloves as well as small size N95 masks. We have plenty of face shields at this time so if you would like one to wear at work, please request one and we will be happy to provide it. The face shield along with the surgical mask or KN95 masks are best practice in regards to preventing the spread of this airborne virus. N95 and face shields in high risk areas is our requirement. The face shield is currently mandatory when providing direct patient care and when you are within 6 feet of a resident/patient.
5. Testing Center- The testing center as well as Employee Health are closed on Thanksgiving Day. The ED will still be open and available for COVID testing in the event that there is a symptomatic individual. The testing center and Employee Health will open once again on Friday. We continue

to communicate with an outside lab that may be in a position to provide us with PCR results within 48 hours. This would be a significant plus in that we are concerned about running out of the rapid test kits. We have a team currently working on that change to another lab and will know more soon on that.

I will close today's update with a thank you to all of Oneida Health providers as well as staff for continuing to provide exceptional care during this challenging time. The Thanksgiving holiday is more than just food, it is an opportunity to reflect on what we have to be thankful for and hopefully you will have some time tomorrow to do just that. In my opinion, we have much to be thankful for.

With Sincerest Gratitude Always,



Gene F. Morreale