



November 6, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

There currently is bad news which is the positive COVID results we are seeing these days are higher than any time since we started testing through our testing center. We had 4 positives from Monday testing and 6 positives from Tuesday testing. We also now have 3 COVID positive inpatients. What is concerning is the majority of these positives are from Asymptomatic individuals who were being tested because they were exposed by someone who was positive. The takeaway from this is to be vigilant, inside of work as well as outside of work, protecting yourself by following the guidelines.

You may have seen in the Syracuse media that Upstate Medical College has suspended 40 or so students who attended a party where someone at that party turned out to be COVID positive. From what I have been reading, this appears to be the national trend in regards to the age of population that are not strictly following the COVID guidelines of masks and social distancing. According to the comments released by Upstate, those students are now quarantined for 14 days and in addition will face significant penalty for behavior detrimental to the health of their co-workers and patients served.

I mention the above as we also have been informed that some of our own have participated in parties where guidelines were not followed. No doubt the length of the pandemic and its anti-social requirements are difficult to continuously adhere to. It is not that you cannot go out, it is the necessity to practice safe behaviors when out as this virus is spread from person to person rather easily and before the spreader knows he/she is infected. That is why it has been so difficult to contain throughout the world.....So please, continue to do your part and respect/follow the guidelines designed to stop the spread of the virus.

Please note the following:

1. PPE – we are ok for now. We are not meeting the required inventory numbers for gloves and continue to struggle to purchase small N95 masks. That size remains our problem to date with no new avenues to pursue purchase. We will continue to work on that though.
2. Testing Center – demand for COVID tests is exceeding our current capacity in the center. We are looking to implement testing in our two Quick Care programs. What is holding us back is the amount of data that needs to be collected and reported to the state on every COVID test. We are working with our electronic health record provider to design fields on the system so we can capture and then report electronically to the state. To this date, the response of the provider has been slow. Once we can accomplish that, we are prepared to start testing symptomatic patients at Quick Care. The testing center can then better serve the non-Quick Care symptomatic patients as well as the elective surgery patients.
3. State Mandates – the weekly testing of ECF employees has been extended until December 3rd. As a reminder, we are not currently able to provide COVID tests to family members who want to visit a loved one in our ECF. Those individuals for now will need to seek testing at

posted community testing events. Madison County Health Department web site has those listed each week.

4. COVID Test Results – as already mentioned, 10 COVID positive patients within the last two days. Community spread appears to be the culprit. We just tested ECF staff and now have 137 tests pending out to Quest (we cannot use the rapid test on ECF employee's per DOH). We have tested 14620, 14231 negative, 246 positives with 3 COVID positive inpatients.

I want to give a positive shout out to our security staff. They have done exceptionally well in welcoming those coming into the hospital and have provided the required screening while providing a positive experience for those individuals in what is a frustrating, invasive process. Also, I continue to respect and thank the ECF staff for having to be poked each week for COVID testing via the test swab. They have worked together to keep COVID out of our ECF!

To all, keep up your spirits, support one another. We will get through this.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

Gene F. Morreale