



Oneida Health
exceptional care... always

October 22, 2020

Dear Fellow Employees,

This week we honor a number of professionals within our organization. This week we are recognizing our Case Management service staff, our Pharmacy service staff as well as our Patient Accounting staff. I personally believe that our organization is functioning so well even during these trying times due to our staff buying into our commitments to teamwork as well as patient/resident centered care. The teamwork component is key to any businesses success and even more so in healthcare because of the sophistication of the services we provide. Thank you to our wonderful staff being recognized this week for all you do as part of our team to make Oneida Health truly exceptional.

Please note the following:

1. COVID Vaccine- Participated in a DOH sponsored call today regarding the release of the COVID vaccine sometime in late November. Unlike the flu vaccine process, this one is rather complicated and requires a significant amount of information to be provided on the application as well as significant resources on our end. Although we have not finalized the decision in regards to how we will make the vaccine available to our employees and to our patients within our network, we are definitely planning on providing the vaccine. Once we review the significant amount of information provided this morning during the call, we will formulate a plan and that will then be shared with all of our providers and eventually all of our staff. Our goal is to ensure that the vaccine is available here for those who want to take advantage of that. More to come on this next week.
2. PPE- The good news is that the duck-bill N95's have passed our testing and therefore we will be able to utilize those within our organization as true N95's. It will require us to retest staff using the duck-bill N95 versus the other style that we currently use. We will be rolling that process out shortly and those N95's will be available to us during early January. In the meantime, our PPE inventory remains adequate to meet our needs.
3. Testing Center- I have received a number of positive comments from patients and community members who have utilized our testing center for their COVID test. I want to thank our staff in that center for the hard work that they perform every day meeting the needs of the many who come through the center to be tested. I also want to once again thank the Laboratory staff who are working very hard to ensure these tests are completed and results reported on a timely basis. A Laboratory Technician will be staffing the test center starting next week and as a result, we will be able to do the rapid COVID test, the flu test and the strep test at the center starting Tuesday. This approach will make the process much more efficient.
4. Clockwise- As some of you may know, we have a process in place at Quick Care where potential patients can schedule an appointment to be seen. The software used for that is called Clockwise. We will be rolling out that same software in our testing center for individuals to schedule

themselves to be seen at our testing center. This will be another efficiency improvement for our testing center program. The development of the new software for this purpose will take 4-6 weeks. We will also look at this software for COVID immunizations so that individuals can schedule themselves if they would like to avail themselves of the vaccine.

5. ECF Admissions- As a reminder, any patient coming from either our hospital or an outside hospital must have a negative COVID PCR test prior to our admitting them. Due to turn-around time delays, we ask that our Hospitalist team and other providers as well as our Care Transitions staff try to identify potential nursing home admissions as early in the stay as possible. Once identified, the PCR test can be ordered and performed and hopefully results available when the patient is cleared for discharge to a long term care facility. This process need to be in place for those going to our ECF or to an outside nursing home.
6. COVID Testing Results- We had a COVID positive yesterday who was tested in our ED; that patient was discharged home for home care. Otherwise we continue to do a significant amount of tests each day and the majority of them are negative which is great news. We did receive 63 rapid test results done yesterday, all negative and received 29 PCR test results from Quest, all negative. We have tested 13,370 individuals, 13,031 negative, 219 positive and we currently have 122 pending, most of those being our ECF employees. We still have 1 COVID positive inpatient who may be discharged soon. We continue with 0 COVID positives in our ECF.

NYS continues to do relatively well in regards to its positive COVID rate compared to the rest of the country. There are now 43 states on the NYS quarantine list. The light at the end of the tunnel is the development of the vaccine through Operation Warp Speed. An effective vaccine will definitely not only help NYS continue with its very good results, it should also help the rest of the country eventually allowing us to re-open our economy.

Thank you all for reading these updates and please feel free to share any questions or concerns you have with me.

With Sincerest Gratitude,



Gene F. Morreale