



December 21, 2021

Dear Fellow Employees,

No need to restate this as you most probably heard already, but...we are at a high point in regards to COVID infections once again. As of this morning, the positivity rate in both NYS and Madison County is at 9% which is one of the highest rates we have experienced since the beginning of the pandemic. It appears the Omicron variant along with the Delta variant are responsible for our current peak.

Please note the following:

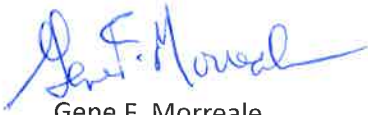
1. Symptom Monitoring Tracking Form- It is as important now as it has been since the beginning of the pandemic that we monitor our symptoms each day when reporting to work. This includes very importantly, the temperature check and other symptom monitoring as noted on the form. I have attached the most up to date symptom monitoring form to today's update so please print out and complete each day you are at work. Return that form to your manager when it is completely filled.
2. Symptomatic Employees- There has been information provided regarding cold symptoms versus COVID symptoms. As you know, this is the time of year where cold symptoms are prominent. In any event, any symptoms out of the ordinary should be communicated to your manager and in his/her absence, to the Employee Health Office. You will then receive direction as to how you should proceed (i.e. work, go home, get tested).
3. Masking- With the above information, it remains imperative that every employee properly mask while at work. We have had a number of employees test positive for COVID and all employees up to this point have been exposed outside of work. This to me is an important fact as it appears the masking at work is effective and a reason why we have not had a spread of COVID in our workplace. As I stated previously, failure to properly mask in the workplace is a New York State and organizational infection control violation.
4. COVID Positives- I need to report that we currently have 12 COVID positive inpatients and as previously stated, a high percentage of individuals who are testing positive are being cared for at home rather than being admitted. We have seen a number of individuals who were fully vaccinated including the booster become COVID positive. The majority are sent home with mild symptoms but we have had admissions as a result of being COVID positive even though fully vaccinated. It does not mean that you should not receive the vaccine. I simply state this so that you please take care and protect yourself as often as possible especially when out in public, with people you do not know.
5. Elective Surgeries- The updated list of healthcare facilities that are not permitted to perform elective procedures has been distributed and Oneida Health remains on it. We are only permitted to perform essential procedures as defined by the NYS Department of Health. That information has been communicated to all of our surgeons and GI physicians and to date, we have had excellent compliance to only scheduling essential surgery and endoscopy cases. It

appears with our current census and staffing predicament that we will remain on this list through the end of the Executive Order which is January 15th.

I want to emphasize that we continue to work diligently each and every day to recruit and retain the current talented staff that we have. As many of you know, this is a constant challenge as all healthcare facilities and most businesses are currently short staffed and are doing all they can to recruit from organizations like Oneida Health. We will be announcing a new and improved recruitment finders fee program within the next several days. The goal being to increase the reward to our current employees who help us recruit staff to help us care for our community. Please be on the lookout for that.

I will close once again with a sincere appreciation to our staff who continue to be here for our patients and residents day in and day out. We cannot do it without you.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gene F. Morreale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gene F. Morreale