



July 8, 2021

Dear Fellow Employees,

In last week's update I provided information in regards to the concern raised on the Delta variant strain of the COVID virus. It appears to be more aggressive and is now prominent in the US. It does not appear to impact vaccinated individuals as much as those who have not been vaccinated. Dr. Anthony Fauci had released information that 99% of the COVID deaths these days are unvaccinated individuals.

I say all of this as we still have a number of employees who have declined receiving the vaccine. We do have a good supply of the J & J vaccine available onsite and I once again encourage those of you have not been vaccinated to consider receiving the vaccine. I would ask that you discuss your predicament in regards to the vaccine with your provider. The current vaccines have proven to be effective for the most part against the new Delta variant virus.

Currently we do not require COVID testing for vaccinated individuals coming to Oneida Health for care. The exception are those who are exhibiting symptoms that may mean they have COVID, even if vaccinated. Those individuals would be tested. We needed to further clarify the process to be followed for individuals who have not been vaccinated and are presenting for care here and do not have a current (within 3 days) COVID negative test result.

Attached to today's update is information regarding the closure of the COVID Testing Center as well as the process for testing individuals within our network. Also included is the process to be followed when individuals present for endoscopy, ambulatory surgery and/or induction/delivery. This process pertains to unvaccinated and asymptomatic individuals only.

The attached is a slight change in our current process and is much more in line with appropriate care and customer service for our patients.

As has been the case in the past, questions or concerns should be forwarded to my attention. Feel free to use anarrow@oneidahealthcare.org or gmorreale@oneidahealthcare.org if you have a question or comment.

We continue to be very busy in all of our settings. Staffing in some areas is problematic and we are doing our best to respond to that. Please be on the lookout for information regarding recruitment as well as ongoing retention initiatives. In the meantime, continue to provide the best care that you can understanding that this is not the norm from the recent past in regards to the high acuity and the high volume of patients we are seeing.

Thank you once again for the caring and compassion you provide our patients, residents and each other.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Gene F. Morreale'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Gene F. Morreale