

## COVID-19 Health System Updates

April 7, 2020, Tuesday

As many of you know, we started the week with some encouraging news. Yesterday, Governor Cuomo announced that New York State has seen a flattening in the number of new COVID-19 cases for two days, and decreases in ICU admissions, hospitalizations, and daily intubations. It is still too early to know if this is truly the apex of the outbreak, or merely a plateau, but it was welcome news. You all know better than most that our fight is not over, and our patients need us now more than ever. With this hopeful news as our beacon, we will continue this humanitarian mission of our lifetimes.

Yesterday, across our Health System, another 72 patients recovered enough to be discharged from our hospitals. At Mount Sinai South Nassau, each time a COVID-19 patient is discharged, they play the Beatles song “Here Comes the Sun” on the overhead PA system so that everyone can join in recognizing the saving of another precious life.

We also learned that the President will honor the Governor’s request to take COVID-19 patients on the hospital ship USNS Comfort, providing up to 1,000 additional beds for patients. And because there are early signs that social distancing may indeed be working, the Governor extended the statewide “pause” on all non-essential services to Wednesday, April 29, furthering the measures that have helped slow the spread so far. Taken together, yesterday brought signs of hope and progress in our battle against this deadly virus.

I also want to acknowledge that while there is much to be hopeful about, death and loss remain all too present. There are no words to fully capture what it feels like to see colleagues, friends, and family members succumb to this pandemic. Our grief and anger can be overwhelming. Somehow, through it all, we find the strength to keep moving forward.

As of yesterday afternoon we had 1,982 COVID-19-positive patients in our hospitals. That included 412 patients in our ICUs. We had another 150 inpatients under investigation (PUIs).

### **Fit Testing for Multiple N-95 Masks**

The two primary N-95 masks that we use currently are made by 3M and Halyard. If you have only been fit tested for one of the two, we will start fit testing for the other one as well, depending on the size you wear. This way we can make sure that there are options when we have both types in stock and also that you can switch back and forth if we have more than one type at any given time. It is looking increasingly likely that, at times, we will have more 3Ms than Halyards, and at other times will have more Halyards than

3Ms. At some point, depending on our sourcing, we may introduce additional N-95 masks as well. This will only happen after they have been fully tested for effectiveness and cleared by our infection prevention and clinical specialists.

### **Ventilator Webinar**

Pulmonary, anesthesiology, and sleep medicine physicians will be hosting a statewide webinar today from 12 to 1 pm that is jointly sponsored by Mount Sinai, the New York State Department of Health, Greater New York Hospital Association, and the Healthcare Association of New York State. The webinar will describe how to repurpose bilevel ventilators for use on intubated patients and how split ventilator protocols may be implemented in the setting of an insufficient supply of conventional ventilation. [Click here to join](#) or dial (929) 436-2866, meeting ID 909 261 683, password 283793.

### **Final Thought**

My friend Tracy shared this note and picture of her colleague—and both gave me permission to share it with you.



*Hi folks - I was just rounding near the ICU and bumped into one of our intensivists. We were all just chatting and I asked "and how's your baby"; as all new moms do, she automatically pulled out her phone to show a picture. The visual of her all garbed up and showing her baby absolutely floored me—I asked her permission to take a quick picture to capture the moment.*

*I wanted to share with you, because sometimes a picture is worth more than a thousand words. Looking forward to coming out on the other side of this.*

Vicki R. LoPachin  
MD, MBA Senior Vice President  
Chief Medical Officer  
Mount Sinai Health System