

COVID-19 Health System Updates, May 19

May 19, 2021 Wednesday

The big news late last week was the announcement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that people who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 don't have to wear masks in most situations. Governor Cuomo announced on Monday that the state would adopt those guidelines effective today.

It's another sign that we are reaching the end of this horrible pandemic. But for us here at Mount Sinai, nothing changes right away.

Both the CDC and New York State announcements said health care facilities would be an exception to the new unmasking permissions, and the New York State Department of Health has not yet issued detailed guidance for health care facilities. Until they do, we're going to have to keep wearing masks whenever we're on Mount Sinai property, unless you're eating or drinking and socially distanced, or if you're alone in a private office. I know it's frustrating, and I will let you know as soon as we're able to change those rules. But please bear with us for now.

We also still have to follow other state and federal rules, including those that require the daily screening form for COVID-19 symptoms. Again, as soon as those rules change, I will let you know.

Effective on Monday, May 24, we are updating our inpatient visitor policy. As COVID-19 decreases in the community, we can allow up to two visitors at a time when it is safe, and allow longer visiting hours at some of our sites.

And we are also updating our meeting policy on Monday. The new rules will include an increase in the number of people allowed at a meeting or event, while still maintaining social distancing and masking. Whenever possible, we do still encourage meetings and events to be virtual. In addition, in-person meetings and events should allow for virtual participation, and all non-Mount Sinai participants should be virtual whenever possible. If it is essential that someone from outside the Health System participate in person, that individual must comply with all visitor requirements, including screening, before entering the campus.

Starting Monday, May 24, the new visitor and meeting policies will be available [here](#).

As of this morning, we had 72 COVID-19-positive inpatients across the system, 15 of whom were in critical care. The New York State seven-day average test positivity rates as of yesterday were 0.9 percent for New York City, Long Island, and the mid-Hudson region.

Finally, I want to remind you that the Town Hall on the Mount Sinai Road Map to Address Racism is today at noon. The Town Hall can be viewed [here](#). For those of you who cannot watch it live, a link to the recording will be posted afterward. I hope you will join me and many of your colleagues for this important event.

Vicki R. LoPachin, MD, MBA

Senior Vice President

Chief Medical Officer

Mount Sinai Health System