

COVID-19 Health System Updates

May 1, 2020 Friday

In Governor Cuomo's daily briefing today, he had a message for front-line health care workers. He said, "We want them to know that we not only appreciate what they're doing, but we're there to support them."

Indeed. In terms of mitigating the COVID-19 crisis, the numbers have continued to drop and we have reached important milestones not seen in over a month. However, despite the positive trends, this week was once again a time of deeply mixed emotions and challenging realities.

Fifty-four days ago, Mount Sinai West admitted the Health System's first known COVID-19 inpatient—a man named Rodrigo Saval. He would spend nearly two full months with us. During that time, he received extraordinary care from literally hundreds of health care's finest. This week, after a long journey, and after months of devotion, compassion, and dedication from our teams, he was finally discharged. His life is not a data point. It is a real and personal victory that could not have happened without your hard work and dedication.

And Mr. Saval is just one of the thousands of successes we have had in the past two months. Because of your sacrifices and skill, nearly 4,500 people—New Yorkers with partners, friends, colleagues, parents, children, and neighbors—have been discharged from our facilities and are now home with loved ones. These are the successes that we embrace, remember, and celebrate. They too help tell the story of this mission.

However, there was also yet another reminder of the devastation and the continued cost that this pandemic has brought upon all of us. This week was especially painful to our health care community as we learned of a colleague at NewYork-Presbyterian who took her own life. The death of Dr. Lorna Breen is beyond heartbreaking and is very personal to all of us. She, like many of you, worked on the front lines during this pandemic. The emotional toll this crisis has brought to our health care heroes is simply enormous, and we must address it and discuss it honestly and openly. We all need each other more than ever and we hope that you will take some time to get to know the [resources](#) that we have available to you and your colleagues to support your own well-being. We have so many examples of members of the Mount Sinai family benefiting from these resources since this pandemic came to our shores. In truth, there is nothing more important.

This week, we proudly expanded these services and announced the opening of the Mount Sinai Center for Stress, Resilience, and Personal Growth. This new Center is a first-of-its-kind initiative in North America designed to address the psychosocial impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and lives of front-line health care providers at Mount

Sinai. We hope it will serve as a model for institutions and communities around the globe.

As a whole, we know that we will emerge stronger and more unified from this experience, but we can't leave anyone behind. Each of you matters dearly. We are here for you, just as you have been there for your patients and communities.

As we round out this week, we again encourage everyone to take deep pride in Mr. Saval's and all our discharged patients' recoveries. We should take solace in the fact that our COVID-19 admissions are decreasing, and also take time to reflect on all the good that you have done and all the people and families you have healed. We remain immensely proud and we are here to help whenever and wherever you need it.

Ken and Dennis