

COVID-19 Health System Updates

June 3, 2020 Wednesday

We are no doubt living through a unique time in human history. A once-in-a-century pandemic, economic challenges that may rival those of the Great Depression, and a critical national spotlight on systemic racism across society—all seem to be converging into this single moment, just as New York City is on the precipice of beginning to reopen.

The protests across America and here in New York have helped to shine light on the undeniable realities of racism and inequity in America. For far too long, African Americans and others have been targeted and persecuted, and denied equal opportunity, for no reason other than the color of their skin, and these protests in cities across the nation have a simple, inarguable message: Black Lives Matter. Our Mount Sinai family stands in solidarity with that message and with these protests and stands against all forms of bias, discrimination, and hatred.

Throughout the depths of the COVID-19 crisis, three things helped us get through: listening to and understanding each other, being willing to evolve in the face of hard truths, and being there for each other when it was needed most. I believe those characteristics will once again be central to delivering real, lasting change in this important national moment.

As of yesterday afternoon, we had 198 COVID-19-positive patients in our hospitals. That included 55 patients in our ICUs. We had another 146 inpatients under investigation (PUIs).

Ambulatory Care Town Hall

Today, Wednesday, June 3, from 10 to 11 am, we will be holding a Town Hall for all Ambulatory Care staff and faculty, featuring a panel of leaders from various disciplines to discuss what resources are in place to facilitate a safe transition to full operations. Topics for discussion will include the [Guidelines for Return to Practice](#), which outlines best practices for screening protocols, facility and practice management, safety and infection control, operational infrastructure, and patient communication, resources available to enhance employee well-being and support mental health, HR policies and remote work, and a question-and-answer session.

The Town Hall will be live-streamed via Zoom. You can tune in [here](#) (password 726377) or by dialing +1 929 436 2866 - Webinar ID: 964 4508 4342. We encourage you to submit questions in advance to meiyun.liu@mountsinai.org, and if possible, please use the [webinar link](#) as phone lines may overload.

Masks Available for all Staff

In addition to masks provided to staff for their job performance, surgical masks are available to all staff for use in a public setting outside of work, including your commute to and from work. To access these additional masks, please speak with your supervisor. Supervisors should communicate with Materials Management if they need additional masks for their team.

For all administrative sites, the Real Estate Division will contact each site lead and deliver masks for individual distribution. If you are not contacted or need more masks, please contact the real estate property manager assigned to your office location. If you have any additional questions please direct them to Jonathan Ciappetta, Director of Real Estate Compliance, at Jonathan.Ciappetta@mountsinai.org.

Safety Hub

As you know, this month we launched a “[Safety Hub](#)” on our website, where we document all the things we are doing to keep our patients and staff safe. We know that patients have concerns about exposure to COVID-19, and that is causing some to put off needed care. Through the Safety Hub, we are working to address and allay those fears. As always, please feel free to email safetyhub@mountsinai.org, where you can send specific questions that you or your patients might have and receive a quick answer.

Likewise, each of us can play an important role in helping to get the message out that it is safe to come for care to our hospitals and ambulatory sites. There are so many people in our communities who are delaying needed care right now. The public trusts you and needs your reassurance.

Safety Communications Toolkit

The Marketing and Communications team has created a [Safety Communications Toolkit](#) as an informational resource containing key messaging on safety practices throughout the Mount Sinai Health System. In addition to safety talking points that have been approved by me and Dr. Bernard Camins, the toolkit contains a guide for hosting webcasts, webinars, and videos. Contents also include promotional materials and step-by-step guidance on the benefits of several social media platforms. The most recent version of this toolkit is always on the [Safety Hub website](#).

Free Legal Services for Patients

The [Mount Sinai Medical Legal Partnership](#) has teamed up with LegalHealth to provide free confidential legal services for all low-income Mount Sinai patients during the COVID-19 crisis (and beyond) through a centralized, virtual platform. The Partnership provides free legal services to Mount Sinai’s patients to improve health outcomes. The COVID-19 crisis has generated more questions about patients’ rights to unemployment benefits, visa extensions, public benefits, end-of-life planning, and custody of children. The virtual platform will help the Partnership better serve patient’s legal needs. LegalHealth is a pioneer in medical-legal partnerships and through this virtual platform, Mount Sinai’s patients will be able to consult with an attorney at no cost to them.

Attorneys are available to speak with staff and patients at (929) 356-9586 or legalhealthtriage@nylag.org. You may also contact the Partnership at info@msmlp.org with any questions.

Meet Our COVID-19 Scientists

A rare but troubling syndrome—in which young COVID-19 patients become severely ill weeks after they seem to have recovered—is being addressed by a truly multidisciplinary team in pediatrics, cardiology, immunology, hematology, infectious diseases, genetics, bioinformatics, and microbiology. George Ofori-Amanfo, MD, says Mount Sinai has developed a “strong and standardized process” for caring for our patients with multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). And a research effort is being led by Dusan Bogunovic, PhD, to answer two main questions: What causes the severe immune response that leads to MIS-C, and why do most other children seem to handle COVID-19 so easily? The research is supported by a gift from the Jonas Brothers and their family. Read more [here](#).

Songs for Mount Sinai

The latest Songs for Mount Sinai playlist is now live. A reminder that this is an effort from Broadway performers and performance artists who gather each week to share songs and messages of support as a tribute to you all. You can find their most recent playlist [here](#), and the master playlist with all of the songs so far [here](#).

Your Questions and Concerns

As a reminder, our COVID-19 Employee Resources website is [here](#). And you can always email CovidQuestions@mountsinai.org if you have any other questions or suggestions for us.

Final Thought

Yesterday, at 3 pm, thousands of members of our Mount Sinai family stood in solidarity and silence to show support for our community; support for our Black colleagues, family, friends, and neighbors; and support for those who are peacefully protesting the killing of George Floyd, and so many others before him. In that moment I could not be any prouder to be your colleague or to wear the Mount Sinai badge alongside you.

Vicki R. LoPachin, MD, MBA
Senior Vice President
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