

A Very Tough Week

March 28, 2020, Saturday

This was a very hard week for all of us at Mount Sinai, and certainly for our colleagues at Mount Sinai West. As the crisis grows, the pressure on all of us mounts because of the work we do and the fear that we must face down each day. Adding to that, we lost a true hero in our ranks, Kious Kelly, RN, whose passion, dedication, and commitment to his patients and colleagues will always be remembered and cherished. His passing brought a somber reminder to an already deadly reality and added yet another layer of grief, frustration, and fear to what was already a very challenging week.

These are the hard truths of our current situation. Mr. Kelly's passing has been devastating to many, but we cannot let our grief or fear inhibit us from the work we must continue to do. New York City is now the worldwide epicenter of the outbreak. We are all being challenged as never before—medically and personally. Each day your skills are being tested in new ways; each day we are all being asked to do a little bit more; and each day the grief and fear for loved ones is compounded by uncertainty about the future.

But we also have to remember that all of us—no matter where we work, who we are, or what our role is—are united in a single mission right now: to save as many lives as possible. The future of our city and country tomorrow will hinge on the work we do and the bravery we show today. It's on us.

Whether you are treating ill patients directly in the ED, answering calls remotely from your kitchen tables, replacing critically needed equipment in an ICU, standing guard helping to keep our facilities safe, or any or the hundreds of jobs required to keep our system running ... your work matters.

People like Adam Bernheim, MD, whose remarkable work was recently highlighted in a [Washington Post article](#). Or Peter Shearer, MD, and his team's heroic work at Mount Sinai Brooklyn, which is chronicled [here](#). Or Barbara Smith, RN, at Mount Sinai Morningside, whose tremendous front-line work was highlighted [here](#). Or any number of the hundreds of nurses and staff who brave the day-to-day traumas and challenges every single day to provide medical help and some inner peace and comfort as this disease continues to tear through our communities. These stories, your stories, are everywhere you look. And we are here to support all of it.

So, while it is certainly not about us, please know that your leadership is working as hard as we can to support all of you in your heroic efforts. Your CEO is working remotely around the clock leading our geographically dispersed Health System and engaging with city, state, and federal elected officials, senior government regulators,

and industry leaders; your Dean is overseeing the school on-site; and your Network President is working with affiliates in China to obtain vital PPE materials for everyone. The point is, it doesn't matter what your role is or who you are or where you are—and we encourage anyone whose job permits them to work from home to do so—we're all playing a part in the Mount Sinai family's extraordinary response.

Last, we want to say thank you. Thank you for your tireless work. Thank you for giving all of yourselves to our mission and to New York City. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to the patients we serve and thank you for continuing to rise above all the obstacles you're facing. Thank you for saving lives.

Ken and Dennis