

COVID-19 Health System Updates

March 31 2020, Tuesday

Every day presents new challenges in our fight against COVID-19, and I know that each day feels harder than the last. But as our fight intensifies, I am deeply heartened by how all of us are coming together to tackle this crisis head on.

As of yesterday afternoon we had 1,360 COVID-19-positive patients in our hospitals. That included 248 patients in our ICUs. We had another 112 inpatients under investigation (PUIs).

We are currently at 67 percent ventilator utilization and more vents are on the way. The Governor has requested that all hospitals become familiar with protocols for using one vent on two patients at a time should the supply not prove adequate for the need. This is something we would normally never attempt. But these extraordinary times might require it. So, we are developing that capability.

Our biggest collective challenge so far is having enough clinical staffing to meet the growing need. This work is physically and emotionally exhausting—and all the more so as staff-to-patient ratios get stretched to accommodate the growing volumes. We need to do better and are working every angle. In a positive development, Governor Cuomo announced yesterday that staff from upstate hospitals would be coming to our region to join in the fight with us. We are very grateful to the Governor and the Mayor, and to everyone who comes to fight by our side. We are also sourcing extra staff from many other places as well. We welcome them all with open arms. Likewise, many of you are floating from your regular Mount Sinai hospitals to other ones within our system to provide much-needed help. This is never easy, and we are beyond grateful to you.

Also, yesterday, the USNS Comfort—a Navy hospital ship with 1,000 beds and 12 operating rooms—arrived in New York harbor. It could be ready to serve patients as soon as today. These extra beds will help free up space for the battle ahead.

As of this past weekend, our convalescent plasma transfusions have begun. One patient was treated on Saturday and two were treated on Sunday. There is more information about Mount Sinai's work in this [New York Times article](#).

Some more good news: So far, a total of 4,204 COVID-19 patients have been successfully treated and subsequently discharged from New York State hospitals. Many lives are indeed being saved.

If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns, you can always email CovidQuestions@mountsinai.org and we will be sure to follow up. And the COVID-19 [employee resource website](#) is constantly being updated with new information.

Your heroic efforts in this humanitarian mission of our lifetime are making all the difference. This is what I find myself reflecting on when I take my Mount Sinai minute at 12 pm each day. I have never been prouder to be your colleague or to wear the Mount Sinai badge.

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