



Kaleida Health

Kaleida Health COVID-19 Response Strategy

Updated March 26, 2020

"Courage is contagious. Every time we choose courage, we make everyone around us a little better and the world a little braver." Brene Brown

Now is our time to spread courage faster than COVID-19. For the community to remain informed and courageous, we share the Kaleida Health strategy for the predicted COVID-19 surge and our requests to help the hospitals and ICUs. This plan was developed in partnership with Erie County Department of Health.

Central Theme

A central theme of the plan is cohorting patients positive for COVID-19 across various locations including clinics, hospitals and long-term care facilities. The goal is to provide optimal care to all patients while minimizing risks for infecting others.

A REALISTIC VIEW INTO OUR FUTURE

- We must be honest with you about expectations for the next month. Using the data coming from China, Italy and the rest of the world, including the experience of our neighbors in New York City and in the State of Washington, we can predict how COVID-19 is spreading through our community.
- We can also estimate the number of people in Western New York who will become ill from COVID-19, including those needing hospitalizations and critical care.
- In the very near future, a large number of people – potentially thousands – will become infected with COVID-19. Fifteen percent of them will require hospitalization.
- **NOW IS OUR TIME TO PREPARE!**

ENGAGE THE OUTPATIENT COMMUNITY IN CONTROLLING THIS DISEASE

To all physicians and providers in the ambulatory setting...we need you. You are the first line of defense in keeping medically appropriate patients home and isolated.

- **Self Monitor:** All healthcare workers, regardless of setting, must check their temperatures twice a day. It is best in the morning BEFORE you come to work and again in the evening.

Also look out for cough or shortness of breath. If you have a temperature greater than 100.0, **DO NOT GO INTO WORK**. Call the coronavirus hotline at 716-859-3222 for next steps.

- Manage expectantly
-Patients with mild to moderate symptoms need to be treated with supportive care.
-**It is unlikely that anyone will have the ability to offer testing to outpatients at any point in the near future.**
- **Minimize direct contact with patients** unless their clinical situation absolutely requires a face-to-face interaction. For questions and guidance, contact Dennis Kuo (dkuo@upa.chob.edu) or Tom Hughes (hughes.thomas@opawny.com)
- Please do not send patients you suspect of having COVID-19 to the hospital for testing. The Emergency Departments do not have the capacity to test and will not test patients who are not admitted.
- Please help discourage non-evidence-based “therapies” being marketed on social media. People who are scared will grasp at unthinkable ideas.
- **Social Distancing, Quarantine and Isolation are how we will control the spread!** Please reinforce to your patients the need to stay home and isolate themselves from others, including family members in the home.
- If you have a patient you feel requires hospital care, please contact 716-859-3222 (coronavirus hotline) before sending the patient to help provide clear information regarding the patient. This will allow us to triage the patient to the appropriate facility to insure they receive the best care possible and minimize unnecessary exposure.
- We are working to **fully implement telehealth** to facilitate appropriate health care in a safe environment while maintaining social distancing. Please contact Tom Hughes (hughes.thomas@opawny.com) for assistance in implementing telehealth in your practice. We have a goal that telehealth will be available by Friday, March 27 and an objective of moving all possible care to an online platform by the week of March 30.

PROTECT THE HEALTHCARE WORKERS, HOSPITALS, AND LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PATIENTS

If the ambulatory centers and outpatient offices are the front line of this battle, then the hospitals and long-term care centers are our strong hold. We must protect everyone providing care and the facilities so that they can continue to serve the patient.

- **All healthcare workers must self monitor. Look for cough and shortness of breath; check your temperature twice a day.** It is best to do this in the morning BEFORE you come to work and again in the evening. If you have a temperature greater than 100.0, **DO NOT COME INTO WORK**. Call the coronavirus hotline at 716-859-3222 for next steps.
- **Screening:** We will take the temperature of all individuals entering any Kaleida Health facility at all access points. The staff will be using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). At these check points, if you have two temperature readings above 100.0 (on different thermometers), you will immediately be provided with a procedure

mask to place over your nose and mouth. The checkpoint staff will also contact the coronavirus hotline at 716-859-3222 for directions about testing and home isolation.

- **Social distancing or staying at least 6 feet away from each other is *CRITICALLY important*** to prevent us from accidentally spreading COVID-19 to our co-workers. In other countries in which the healthcare workers did not practice social distancing, they experienced very high rates of healthcare workers infections.
- **If you develop symptoms while working, you must immediately place a mask over your nose and mouth.** Remove yourself from others; the best option is going straight home. Then call the coronavirus hotline at 716-859-3222 for assistance in being tested for COVID-19, arrangements with your supervisor, and contacting your primary care provider. If you are unable to go home or worried about spreading COVID-19 to family members, the individuals on the hotline can assist you.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, you will be required to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the time of a high-risk encounter or from onset of symptoms. Once your symptoms have resolved, you must be cleared before returning to work by your primary care physician or the Erie County Department of Health.
- When you return, YOU WILL BE OUR STRONGEST TEAM MEMBER with some immunity to COVID-19.
- We have successfully identified additional sources for PPE, especially masks, and these are now on their way. The community has been invaluable in helping identify these additional resources, for which we are all deeply grateful.
- If you know of individuals who can help with resources from the community, please have them contact 716-859-3222.
- We have instituted a universal masking policy in which all employees will wear a mask at all times when working.
- Our long-term care facilities are home to our highest risk patients. They need our protection. A grim statistic is that at Life Care Center in Kirkland, WA, 43 percent of the residents in this single facility died from COVID-19. Because of this, we have restricted visitation and are assessing patients within these facilities for symptoms of COVID-19 daily.

TREATMENT AND TESTING

As we learn more and more about this virus, there are significant signs of hope and encouragement.

- The World Health Organization has started the SOLIDARITY trial. This study will assess which combination of 4 potential drugs is most effective in treating COVID-19 infection. The study is happening all over the world to obtain results as quickly as possible. Never, in the history of humankind, has a study of this grand scale been started, let alone developed and launched in a few weeks. It is a testament to the world coming together to fight this virus. We are also learning better ways to ventilate and position patients to

maximize oxygen delivery to our most critical patients. Our critical care teams are leading this work for the community.

- We are rapidly **establishing the ability to do high-volume testing for COVID-19** on a daily basis. Our deepest gratitude goes out to the Pathology team, which is making this happen. The increased testing allows us to quickly identify patients and employees with COVID-19, ensure they receive the proper therapy in the proper location, and reduce the risks of infecting others around them. Kaleida Health Laboratories continues to increase its testing capabilities daily.

Remember, together we will fight and contain COVID-19. Together, we will find the courage to care for our patients. And our courage will be contagious, more contagious than this stupid, little virus. And as we share our courage, we will help each other be braver and make the world better.