

March 23, 2020

Dear Staff,

Over the past few weeks, we have seen an increase in the number of patients presenting to our facility with confirmed COVID-19. There has been a tremendous effort by all of the Staff to prepare for a potential surge of COVID-19 patients over the next few weeks.

At the core of our strategy to prepare for the pandemic is to create a safe working environment for all Staff. The best way to understand our response strategy to the pandemic is to understand a few basic principles of infection control and disaster management.

Our goal as a health care facility during this pandemic is to control the spread of the virus with the lowest mortality rate possible. To achieve this, we have divided the hospital into two basic cohorts: the patients infected with the virus and the patients who are not infected. The creation and maintenance of bio-containment zones to separate the infected patients from the non-infected patients is the foundation of our strategy.

Around the campus, you will see outdoor tents and indoor patient wards, which have been converted to bio-containment units. Each unit has a different function.

The outdoor tents are triage and education areas. In an effort to divert as many infected patients from entering the main treatment areas, the tents are situated close to the Emergency Department entrance. The majority of patients who present to the hospital seeking treatment for COVID-like symptoms are triaged in the tents. There, they are given educational materials on home quarantine and instructions on when they may need to return to the hospital if their condition worsens.

If a patient presents to the Emergency Department with more advanced symptoms that will require an admission to the hospital, they are placed in a bio-containment area within the Emergency Department and triaged. When admitted to the inpatient ward, they will go to one of the Bio-containment units. Currently, they are located on A-4 and D2N. D4S and D7S are currently being converted to bio-containment units. The goal is to keep the COVID-Positive patients isolated from the general patient population. As the number of admitted COVID-Positive patients continues to increase, the D-Tower will be converted into multiple biocontainment units. The non-COVID patients will be moved to inpatient units in the A and R buildings.

The last cohort of patients are those who are suspected of having COVID-19 but are awaiting test results. They are termed Persons Under investigation (PUI). These patients will be held in the C-Ground Observation unit. If they test positive for COVID, they will be admitted to a bio-containment unit. If they test Negative, they will be admitted to the non-COVID patient wards in the other patient towers.

In an effort to keep Staff safe while at work, as COVID-19 is now prevalent in the community, all Staff and patients entering the campus through the D-Building Lobby, E-building Lobby, and R-Building Lobby are screened for symptoms. If there is suspicion that they may be infected, they will not be permitted to enter the campus and re-directed to the screening tents in-front of the Emergency Department.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the command center at 718-245-8989 or [kingscommandcenter@nychhc.org](mailto:kingscommandcenter@nychhc.org).