

March 26, 2020**Immediate Release****Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** jcav@chsbuffalo.org

Catholic Health COVID-19 Update

Because of the increasing number of media inquiries and our need to focus our resources on caring for patients, we will be sending periodic media updates. Mark A. Sullivan, President & CEO, is committed to having more virtual press conferences as more updates become available. Thank you for your understanding.

- We are working closely with federal, state and local governments to prepare for the surge in COVID-19 patients. We have submitted our surge plans to New York State, with the requested increase in bed capacity of 50% throughout Catholic Health.
- Catholic Health admitted the first patients to its COVID-19 Treatment Facility today at St. Joseph Campus located at 2605 Harlem Road in Cheektowaga. Treatment units at the site are being “phased-in” to help alleviate pressure at other Catholic Health hospitals and support the Governor’s plan to increase surge capacity. The campus is a “direct admit” COVID-19 Treatment Facility, not a walk-in facility, which means patients will only be admitted with a doctor’s order from another Catholic Health facility. More detailed information will be available tomorrow, including video footage from inside the facility.
- We continue to build our inventory of ventilators and at our COVID-19 Treatment Facility and Catholic Health hospitals to increase our supply.
- We continue to build our supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) through our purchasing channels and are grateful for the donated supplies we continue to receive.
- Our Emergency Department activity has increased, but we are managing well. To protect the safety of all our patients and staff, in preparation for a potential increase in patients seeking care, we have established medical triage tents outside our Emergency Departments at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, Sisters of Charity Hospital – Main St. Campus, Mount St. Mary’s Hospital, and the Mercy Ambulatory Care Center in Orchard Park. The tents, which have heat, light and medical record capabilities, will allow us to safely triage and assess those who can be evaluated and discharged to home quickly, from those needing further testing or inpatient care.
- Catholic Health is still waiting for supplies from Cepheid, Inc. to begin onsite rapid COVID-19 testing. We are working directly with the Governor’s office and local government officials to secure testing supplies for WNY given the global demand. In the meantime, we continue to utilize Quest for our testing needs.

#