



For Immediate Release

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Contact: Caitlin McCann

Vice President

Mohawk Valley Health System

315-624-5433

cmccann@mvhealthsystem.org

Contact: Victoria Wenke

Marketing and Communications Assistant

Masonic Medical Research Institute

Phone: 315-735-2217

vwenke@mmri.edu

Mohawk Valley Health System and Masonic Medical Research Institute Announce Partnership to Process COVID-19 Tests Locally

UTICA, N.Y. – On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, the Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) and Masonic Medical Research Institute (MMRI) announced a new partnership to process MVHS COVID-19 tests at the MMRI laboratory. This joint venture will greatly decrease the turnaround time for COVID-19 results for MVHS patients and will help identify those with COVID-19 faster, providing a significant benefit to MVHS and its patients and residents.

Under this new partnership, MVHS will collect the COVID-19 test sample from the patient and send it to MMRI. MMRI will run the test and send the results back to MVHS the same day

“This partnership creates a local solution to a national problem,” said Darlene Stromstad, FACHE, MVHS president/CEO. “Like many hospitals across the country, we’ve had a challenge getting adequate supplies of testing materials. The very limited supply of “rapid” COVID-19 tests that produce results in 45 to 90 minutes has meant we have had to send our tests out to be run in other states, sometimes taking up to three days or longer to obtain results. Waiting for results has often led to longer hospital stays (particularly for nursing home patients who must test negative before they can go back to the home) and in some cases has delayed elective procedures. Now, we will be able to send our rapid tests to MMRI and get our results back the same day. And, it’s all accomplished right here in our region.”

“MMRI has lab equipment that they use for research which is a different process than producing testing results. However, within three weeks of an outreach email from MMRI Executive Director of Research Dr. Maria Kontaridis we had an agreement on a process that worked for us both. This is good for our patients and good for our community. I sincerely thank MMRI for partnering with us.”

“We are eager, willing and will do what is necessary to assist with whatever is asked of us,” said Dr. Maria Kontaridis, MMRI Executive Director of Research, Gordon K. Moe Professor and Chair Biomedical Research and Translational Medicine. “By partnering with MVHS and becoming a state testing laboratory for COVID-19 we hope to help local officials and physicians better manage their patients, reduce the deleterious effects of COVID-19, and help us all get our lives back to normal sooner.”

###