Our patients will do the same. A fear of infection has become a real factor. One recent survey indicates more than 80% of Americans have concerns about infection in a medical facility. It is up to us to restore the confidence of our communities it is safe to come to one of our MercyOne facilities for care.

MercyOne is committed to ensuring we provide the safest environment for everyone who enters our Circle of Care. We will do everything possible to ensure confidence in our care delivery, this includes the precautions taken by our colleagues, our physicians, our patients and their family members.

It is important for us to realize safety starts with us as individuals. We need to protect ourselves by practicing social distancing and wearing a mask in all care settings as outlined in multiple guidelines. Our guidelines help ensure we present a safe care environment to our patients and their family members.

We care about you, our MercyOne colleagues, and we appreciate your commitment to being safe and providing a safe environment to each person we are privileged to serve.

Thank you for your incredible commitment to our special Mission at MercyOne. We hope your summer is one filled with fun, family and friends.

Bob Ritz, MercyOne CEO and President

This month’s features:
This month we are featuring the incredible ways we have come together in our COVID-19 battle. Click on the Key Result to read Focused Stories of how you are bringing our Cultural Beliefs to life.
This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

I work as a Respiratory Therapist in the Emergency Care Unit. Recently, I cared for a patient who had to be intubated due to COVID-19. I'm happy to report that she went home to recover and has been doing well!

After she was discharged, she stopped back into the ECU because she had some residual pain. She recognized me and told me how much she appreciated all of our care and for “treating her like she was a human.” This patient also told me how she could hear us talking even though she was sedated. She always felt loved and cared for.

This impacts Consumer Experience and hearing these words from this patient reinforced why I love working at Mercy Iowa City!

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me.

~ Deb Havel, Respiratory Therapy

This is what Be ONE looks like...

MercyOne Siouxland is continually blessed by the power of MercyOne as we experience the true meaning of Be ONE during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Close to 20 colleagues from outside of Siouxland have temporarily joined the MercyOne Siouxland team to care for COVID patients. That number includes 17 critical and acute care nurses and two respiratory therapists. The medical professionals come from MercyOne North Iowa, MercyOne Dubuque, MercyOne New Hampton and Trinity ministries from as far away as Massachusetts.

MercyOne Siouxland colleagues continue to comment about how thankful they are that they are receiving support from within our own MercyOne system and how wonderful the extended MercyOne family is to work with. We truly do benefit from and strengthen MercyOne.

These colleagues coming together impacted Consumer Experience and Team Engagement.

A group of nurses from MercyOne North Iowa pose after their orientation at MercyOne Siouxland.
**Consumer Experience**

"WOULD RECOMMEND" AT THE 75TH PERCENTILE BY 2021
"WOULD RECOMMEND" AT THE 55TH PERCENTILE BY 2020

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**This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...**

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our clinical colleagues were challenged to find ways to keep families and patients connected in spite of strict visitor restrictions. Brittany, a MercyOne Siouxland registered nurse, saw an opportunity to improve her patient's experience, and that of the patient's loved one, by finding a way to keep them in regular communication.

The ICU nurse helped the family download apps on their phones to video chat while they had to be apart. Brittany’s act of innovative, personalized care quickly became the gold standard for countless other nurses and health care professionals. MercyOne Siouxland now daily uses technology like FaceTime and Zoom to connect patients to their loved ones.

Brittany’s work positively impacted our Key Result of Consumer Experience.

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**This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...**

Our hospitalist team was caring for an elderly woman on our NASA unit who unfortunately was clinically declining and nearing end of life. The care team (especially her nurse, Sarah Schoner, and the charge nurse, Carrie Hobbs) went out of their way to not only provide excellent medical care and advocate for the patient but also to accommodate a visitor. This accommodation lightened the sense of isolation for all involved and provided comfort to the sick and their loved ones. The family and patient were very thankful for this and were able to say their goodbyes prior to the patient's passing. This work impacts our Key Result of Consumer Experience.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me.

~ Dr. Dan Leary, Hospitalist

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**This is what Personalize Care looks like to our patients...**

I took my mother-in-law to see Dr. Nickles at MercyOne Clinton. We were screened at the front door. We were greeted with a friendly cheerful voice making us feel welcome. The receptionist had taken time to have everything she needed for our visit.

The team and Dr. Nickles were thorough in the exam and care of my mother-in-law. As we looked at options for her care, Dr. Nickles offered home health services and therapy to assist her recovery. He offered to complete the follow-up visit through telehealth due to her age and weakness. He offered to even do it after I got off work which would have been after hours for him. I was so impressed with his compassion and personalized care to not only meet the patient's needs but the family's need. He instilled confidence as he explained the telehealth procedure and how easy it was to complete the visit from a home with no internet.

At the end of the visit, I went to get the vehicle. The ambassador brought her outside in the wheelchair and proceeded to assist her into the vehicle. I was so impressed and thankful for the help.

Dr. Nickles personalized care impacts our Consumer Experience.

~ Colleen Meggers, MercyOne Clinton
"WOULD RECOMMEND" AT THE 75TH PERCENTILE BY 2021
"WOULD RECOMMEND" AT THE 55TH PERCENTILE BY 2020

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

MercyOne North Iowa Birth Center created a little bit of happiness during the COVID-19 pandemic by celebrating the unofficial holiday – May the Fourth Be with You! The handmade Yoda and Princess Leia hats were a “special way” to celebrate the two sets of twins born the week of May 4. Hats were made by volunteers and colleagues at MercyOne North Iowa.

This example of personified care will greatly impact our Consumer Experience.

This is what Own It! and Improve Daily look like to me...

When MercyOne Elkader activated our incident command – Katie Pope, Educational Specialist, sprung into action to assist our team. She has worked hard each day since implementing policies, procedures, standard work and training for all of our colleagues. One example of her hard work is transforming our PPE supply list into a visual board for all hospital and EMS colleagues to reference real time.

Thank you Katie for your dedication to Improving Daily and keeping our colleagues up to date on all changes in relation to COVID-19. Your hard work impacts our Key Results of Consumer Experience and Team Engagement.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

A MercyOne colleague serving as a Caravan driver stopped and bought flowers for a cancer patient she was picking up. It was this ladies last day of chemo, and she wanted to celebrate her success!

This impacts our Key Result of Consumer Experience.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me.

~ Rita Konrardy, MercyOne Northeast Iowa

Prioritizing health and safety for colleagues

Watch to see how we are prioritizing health and safety at all MercyOne care locations.
This is what Innovate looks like to me...

MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center is innovating to care for COVID-19 patients. The hospital’s Wound Care Center’s hyperbaric chambers were implemented for use on ill COVID-19 patients thanks to a clinical trial. A non-English speaking patient who consented to be part of the trial, had hesitations after signing on. Theresa, a MercyOne provider, was able to speak with him in Spanish to help the patient understand the treatment and all the possible benefits.

This patient’s care was part of a clinical trial for which MercyOne Siouxland was selected to participate. It concluded May 13 with patients being treated for COVID-19 with oxygen therapy. Physicians are currently awaiting results of that trial with the hope that it will lead to greater understanding of how COVID-19 affects the body and the role intense oxygen therapy can play in recovery.

Theresa’s time to calm her patient’s fears impacts Consumer Experience.

This is what Own It! looks like to me...

In addition to the drastically reduced volume experienced in the last two months in the emergency department at MercyOne Dubuque, we also noticed that we weren’t seeing our typical cases.

It makes sense that there might be a reduction in accidents since more people are staying home, but where have the sick patients gone, or the patients who are experiencing chest pain?

The concern was that patients who might be experiencing life-threatening symptoms were not seeking care out of fear of being exposed to COVID-19 in the emergency department. Together with the public relations team, we crafted an article for the Telegraph Herald to help get word out to the community that it is safe to come to the ED, and expressed that patients should not ignore symptoms of a heart attack or stroke — including shortness of breath, chest pains and numbness and weakness on one side of the body — and should absolutely seek medical care.

The education worked.

Within the next week, we saw an increase in volume, with several patients commenting they saw the article and felt reassured that it was safe to come the emergency department.

This is what Own It! looks like to me, impacting the Key Result of Quality.

~ Nick Edwards, MD, emergency department physician
Here's what Own It! looks like to me...

Our Pastoral Care team has spent countless hours with our colleagues, especially on our critical care and NASA units, since the pandemic hit our community. Reverend Jenny Seylar, Father Terry Ball and Reverend Patty Henderson have positively impacted Team Engagement by offering prayers, listening ears, support groups and guidance to all of our colleagues during this time of heightened anxiety, stress and exhaustion. Oh, and the treats they’ve delivered to our departments have been uplifting, too!

That’s what Own It! looks like to me.

~ Sara Maduka, Culture Engagement Specialist

This is what Be ONE looks like to me...

Amy Friese, 4E clinical leader, used her days off to make an inspiring video montage of our staff that we are showing at our huddles every day and that will positively impact our team engagement.  

Click to watch.

This positively impacts our Key Result of Team Engagement.

Here's what Own It! looks like to me...

With so many community members contacting us to ask how they could show their appreciation and support, the marketing and community education teams organized a community parade to bring everyone together in a combined show of support. On the evening of April 23, well over 100 vehicles circled the MercyOne Dubuque campus. Community members and first responders waved to colleagues and patients, and many decorated their vehicles with signs of support and thanks.

It was an incredible evening as our community came together for our colleagues and patients. We already felt our community’s support, but actually seeing it was very special.

This is what Own It! looks like to me and impacts the Key Result of Team Engagement.

~ Matt Daughenbaugh, marketing director
This is what Improve Daily looks like to me...

MercyOne Siouxland leaders have created an opportunity for thoughtful, focused communication with colleagues as we navigate COVID-19 challenges. On March 31, the hospital began twice weekly town hall meetings, broadcasting live to all colleagues at the main hospital campus, critical access hospitals and our clinic network. The topics of the town halls is determined by colleague feedback gained through surveys.

Now in our eighth week of town hall presentations, we continue to Improve Daily in providing for our colleagues a chance to hear from front line team members about their challenges, learnings and successes in treating COVID-19 patients. The result was a week of powerful storytelling from acute care, ICU and ER nurses and well as respiratory therapist and case managers about how MercyOne Siouxland has come together in a time of crisis to better serve our patients and each other.

The feedback and town halls positively impacts Team Engagement.

This is what Own It looks like to me...

Jo Caloud in Nuclear Medicine organized Hearts for Health Care to display in our department.

These hearts are scattered throughout the department and are a sign of support and hope for colleagues and patients.

Michelle's story positively impacts our Key Results of Team Engagement and Consumer Experience.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me.

~ Michelle Wright, MercyOne Northeast Iowa

This is what Own It! looks like to me...

Collections and Receivable in MercyOne Northeast Iowa, donated essential non-food items to the Buchanan County Food Pantry to help in this time of need. Items stemmed from toilet paper, dish soap, diapers, laundry soap, cleaning products and hygiene products.

This impacts our Key Result of Team Engagement.

This is what Own It! looks like to me.

~ Andrea Covington, MercyOne Northeast Iowa
This is what Own It! looks like to me...

Val Bovy and Laura Rogers of MercyOne Northeast Iowa Informatics Department have been making and distributing button headbands and other gadgets for protecting ears with constant mask use. The two have distributed 180 headbands and 50 gadgets to colleagues at MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center.

This impacts our Key Result of **Team Engagement**.

This is what Own It! looks like to me.

~ Kayla Anderson, MercyOne Northeast Iowa

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues, leadership proactively packaged and delivered kits of personal protective equipment to colleagues at MercyOne Des Moines and West Des Moines Medical Centers.

This demonstration of taking responsibility for the experience of our colleagues positively supports our **Team Engagement**.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

Shanna Mueggenberg, the cardiovascular surgery nurse supervisor at MercyOne Siouxland, is also a member of the Army National Guard. Shanna had been working hard toward earning her commissioning as an officer, finally achieving the distinction just as the COVID-19 pandemic hit our community.

The commissioning as an Army Reserve Lieutenant would traditionally be met with a large ceremony including involvement from her recruiter, friends and family. That became impossible with the implementation of COVID gathering and travel restrictions.

Instead, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Larry Volz, a former Major in the Air Force himself, organized a commissioning and pinning ceremony within the walls of MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center.

Second Lieutenant Mueggenberg was surrounded by her young family, with surgery colleagues and senior leaders appropriately socially distance and ready to meet her accomplishment with applause. Her recruiter was even able to be part of the ceremony via FaceTime.

Through this ceremony, we helped improve **Team Engagement**.
This is what Innovate looks like to me...

When Dr. Mardan sees a patient, he does a lot of drawing to help illustrate veins and shows them their radiology pictures to help with patient education. Since shifting almost all our patients to telemedicine, Dr. Mardan uses a white board during virtual visits, so he can continue to draw pictures for his patients. He even takes his webcam from the computer to show the radiology pictures to his patients, so they get the same education as if he was in the exam room with him.

Dr. Mardan’s innovations to offer his patients a thorough appointment will greatly impact Quality.

This is what Innovate looks like to me...

MercyOne Dubuque took the lead to organize a targeted testing program along with the Dubuque County Public Health Incident Management Team. Approximately 1,456 individuals were tested over a three-day period, May 6 – 8. Those tested included colleagues of long-term care facilities and those identified through contact tracing.

The testing went really well, and staff felt good about the experience. There was a lot of work before the site opened with local partners, and it was good to see the plan worked as intended.

This is what Innovate looks like to me, which impacts our Key Result of Quality.

~ Gwen Hall Driscoll, community education nurse

This is what Improve Daily looks like to me...

Caring for persons under investigation (PUI) and COVID-19 positive patients requires a tremendous amount of preparation and diligence from our colleagues, as they follow stringent processes designed to protect patients, visitors and themselves.

With a growing number of COVID-19 patients, there was a need to expand the area available to improve care. To this goal, the post-anesthesia care unit at MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center was converted to create a dedicated critical care unit for COVID-19 positive patients. The unit’s open concept layout has proven advantageous, with care teams able to easily monitor all patients at once, and move from patient room to patient room without having to don and doff PPE – saving time and supplies – and supporting Quality care.
MercyOne has been actively engaged with our federal delegation and our state legislature since COVID-19 entered our state. This ongoing communication has been critical given the fast-pace needs for regulatory relief through waivers as well as financial relief to help offset the losses we are witnessing across our health care system due to the stay at home order and elective procedures being paused.

On the federal side, MercyOne has benefited from the CARES Act (a COVID-19 stimulus bill) receiving nearly $238 million in grants for our owned and managed care locations. Given the revenue loss we have experienced across the system, these dollars have been critical to stabilize our system and services as we enter recovery mode with COVID part of our operations. There is still $100 billion remaining in the emergency fund created by the CARES Act, and our hope is to ensure our hospitals and clinics receive an equitable distribution of that sum.

We are also asking for the Medicare Advanced Payments to be forgiven to help support our ongoing COVID-related expenses and losses. Additionally, as many of you have been a part of, telehealth has become a critical vehicle for the delivery of care. We hope that fair payment by Medicare, along with the removal of regulatory barriers, can be made permanent.

On the state side, our legislature will return to the Capitol on June 3. When they reconvene, we plan to work with them on legislation to address telehealth fair payment for commercial payors, broad immunity for our colleagues during the pandemic, and medical malpractice, specifically a hard cap being put into place for our hospitals and providers.

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**Content to Share: Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (PMIS)**

Since April 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been investigating a suspected link between Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (PMIS) in children and COVID-19. PMIS is also known as multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C).

*Read or listen now to learn more* >

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**Not all heroes wear capes**

[Click here](#) to purchase your T-Shirt today. Proceeds support the MercyOne Foundations COVID-19 Relief Funds.
This is what Personalize Care looks like to me...

Even amid a global pandemic, cancer continues. That’s why preparations continue, too, for the opening of Dubuque’s first comprehensive cancer center. Despite some accommodations due to COVID-19, the MercyOne Dubuque Cancer Center is still on schedule for a June opening. Final details are taking place inside and around the building, and we are busy with our preparations.

When we planned the cancer center, we really thought about what our patients need when it comes to cancer treatment and support. The needs of our patients are reflected in every detail, and not only in the physical space but also in the team.

With the MercyOne Dubuque Cancer Center, for the first time, patients with cancer in the Dubuque area will be able to receive comprehensive care under one roof, eliminating the need to travel from provider to provider and often out of town for the care they need.

This is what Personalize Care looks like to me, impacting the Key Result of Ambulatory Growth.

~ Dave Tatman, director
MercyOne Dubuque Cancer Center

This is what Innovation and Be ONE looks like to me...

More than 1,200 colleagues have come together to rapidly learn how to serve patients with telehealth visits. From providers, nurses, informatics to administrators, clinic managers and more individuals and teams have Owned It! in unique ways to provide and support virtual visits.

Telehealth has increased exponentially with more than 50,000 telehealth visits scheduled in April and May. MercyOne now schedules 6,000 to 8,200 visits per week. These innovators continue to strengthen each other by sharing clinical and administrative learnings to improve our efficiency and better deliver care to patients.

Patients are raving about this method of receiving care:

- The receptionist was quick to arrange it and provide the instructions via email. Dr. Boevers was right on time for our appointment, and she took the time to listen to my concerns and provide very helpful medical guidance and solutions. Overall it was a great experience.

- Being a home bound patient the telemed option is extremely helpful for me...so I hope this option continues as I do not want to leave this system as I have a 40 year relationship with your health care services and do not wish to change.

- I really liked being able to do the telemed appointment recently considering the COVID-19 situation and would welcome the chance to do more appointments in this fashion. It would save a lot of time as far as having to take off/miss work.

- Continue to provide mental health services via Zoom. It was so much less stressful than preparing for an in office visit! Perhaps require first visits be in person and then give health provider discretion as to continue in office visits or go to remote.

This work supports Ambulatory Growth and Financial Performance.
This is what Own It! looks like to me...

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Denisa Hagau, MD, cardiologist at MercyOne North Iowa Heart Center, noticed her patients were not coming in for appointments and there were zero cases reported for acute heart attacks. This made her very concerned. Heart attacks and strokes do not just stop during a pandemic.

Dr. Hagau reached out to other MercyOne locations to ask if they were having the same concerns; and sure enough, they reported the same situation. Patients were having heart attacks or strokes in their homes instead of seeking care, because they were afraid to visit the hospital.

Recognizing this trend and concerned for her patients, Dr. Hagau reached out to Marketing to help publicize this concern. A variety of tactics were used to relay this message to the public with marketing assistance.

After publicizing Dr. Hagau’s concern we noticed an upward trend in patients. Many of Dr. Hagau’s patients saw her on TV and reported that they felt more comfortable to seek help when needed after seeing the interview.

Dr. Hagau’s concern and drive to make the community aware of this important health concern will impact Ambulatory Growth.

Hearts for Health Care Heroes – see photos from across MercyOne

[Images of people holding signs and heart shapes]
COVID-19 Poses Financial Challenges to Health Care Providers, including MercyOne

During this global health crisis, many people are surprised to learn that health care organizations are experiencing significant financial challenges. After all, we are on the front line of the battle against COVID-19 and working to care for patients who need us. However, like other health care organizations, MercyOne continues to face major stewardship challenges due to COVID-19 for two main reasons:

- Elective (non-urgent) surgeries and procedures were cancelled or postponed. We lost all the revenue for these services which had provided a large portion of our business.
- New COVID-19 supplies, equipment and resources were needed to fight COVID-19 and save lives in the communities we serve. Actions included:
  - Increased ordering of masks, gloves and gowns to help keep patients and colleagues safe.
  - Emergency money spent on COVID-19 surge plans to buy more beds, ventilators, etc.
  - Increased clinical staffing to support surge capacity through redeployment of current colleagues.

Reduced spending

This required us to make difficult decisions affecting our colleagues, including temporary furloughs and reduction in hours for colleagues in non-critical care roles (primarily non-clinical roles). Additional actions included:

- Froze capital spending (such as major building improvements), except for supporting ministries in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Reduced executive leader (vice president and above) pay up to 25 percent.
- Worked with vendors to reduce costs.
- Reduced spending everywhere we could such as travel, dues, etc. We are looking more ways to reduce spending, every day.

Help from the government and other sources

To help essential businesses, national, state and local governments released funding to essential businesses. MercyOne has accepted funding, which has helped with some of the COVID-19 costs. However, it is not enough to cover our COVID-19 losses. We are grateful for the support, but the lost income has negatively impacted our financial position. The difficult decisions that affect our colleagues, such as furlough and reduced hours, remain necessary.

CARES Act

The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which gave us stimulus checks, is also supporting essential businesses. Health care providers received funds from the Act’s $100 billion Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund for Health Care Providers, of which MercyOne received funding for lost revenues due to COVID-19. Other support received from the CARES Act includes:

- Funds to help create telehealth services.
- Increased payment from Medicare for patients with COVID-19.
- Advanced payments from Medicare (which will have to be repaid)
- Temporary suspension of Medicare penalty payments.

Health Plan and Health Insurance Support (Commercial Payors)

MercyOne also asked national and regional insurance companies (commercial health plans) for help through improved telehealth coverage and reimbursement and faster claim payments.

Recovery Plans

We continue to be a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities, which is needed more now than ever before. MercyOne is resuming critical services while enhancing the safety precautions already in place. We are taking a phased approach to resuming elective services and surgeries.
This is what Innovate and Be ONE look like to me...

Amid widespread shortages of hand sanitizer, we took matters into our own hands by compounding hand sanitizer. Acquiring the necessary packaging materials and raw ingredients was a complex process but we were able to move ahead when a local supplier provided eight drums of alcohol, enough to make 400 gallons of hand sanitizer. We began creating the hand sanitizer in late March and are now selling it in all six MercyOne Dubuque Pharmacy retail locations, making it available for the community to purchase.

At a time when supplies are short for all of our locations, we truly worked together – pharmacy, plant engineering, SPD and marketing to Be ONE and meet a system-wide need for sanitizer. Not only did we supply Dubuque, we have helped some of our local long-term care facilities and hospice organizations as well as MercyOne locations in Cedar Falls and Waterloo.

This is what Innovate and Be ONE look like to me. This impacts our Key Result of Financial Performance.

~ Jess Purcell Smith, PharmD, MPH, outpatient pharmacy director, MercyOne Pharmacy