Message from CEO

This Thanksgiving, it is a special opportunity to look at the positive things 2020 has brought us and reflect on all which we are thankful for at MercyOne. Yes, this message may seem counter to what most people are thinking, but every cloud has a silver lining. This year is no exception.

We are thankful for how this year has brought us together, as ONE, to more closely align with our Mission and Values. We have spent the last nine months focused on a mission to defeat the COVID-19 virus. We have learned the power of our system and our Mission when, together, we focus on the challenge before us. Never before have we united to fight the forces of the challenge. With COVID-19 we did, and we found our true strength. For this, I am thankful.

We are thankful for the opportunity to carry on the legacy of the religious women who founded our ministries, some more than 100 years ago, to meet the needs of their communities, much like we continue today.

We are thankful for each of the committed, talented and compassionate colleagues and providers who are part of our Circle of Care. Your talents have never been more needed, and we appreciate your service to our communities and each other. You have shown the world why your calling is so special and important.

We are thankful for the opportunity to serve our communities in their greatest time of need. We continue to advocate for their support in masking up.

And, we are thankful for you. It is you who bring our special purpose to life, to help those in need and to uphold our commitment to help each person live their best life possible.

Thank you for all you do. We wish you a very Happy Thanksgiving. It is truly a privilege to serve together. I am thankful for the opportunity to call you colleagues.

CEO and President

Watch this month’s MercyOne CEO Update Video >

This month’s features:

Click on the Key Result to read Focused Stories of how we are living our Mission, Values and Cultural Beliefs.
In gratitude

In recent Facebook posts, MercyOne asked the community to share a message of thanks to MercyOne health heroes working in the Intensive Care Unit caring for COVID-19 patients, and the positive response was overwhelming! There were more than 441 shares, 2,900 reactions and 450 messages to our health care team – here are just a few:

- I can’t say enough how much I appreciated and always will, the staff at MercyOne when I was in the emergency department as well as hospitalized on the COVID floor. MercyOne is second to none!
- It’s a comfort to know we have such a great facility staffed with dedicated and caring medical personnel in our area!
- Thank you all so very much! Your work to help our communities and loved ones through this terrible pandemic is truly appreciated. We value you! We thank you!!
- You are all appreciated. Thank you all for every time you go the extra mile, stay an extra hour, thick of a little trick or adjustment to make the patient feel better, find a solution, hold a hand, say a prayer and potentially risk your lives.
- I wish I could find the right words to describe these people and the job they do. They are amazing, dedicated, and they touched my family and our hearts. Remember them in your prayers tonight and tomorrow as they go about the work they do so well.
- Thank you for everything you did for my husband Phil and putting up with me calling and worrying and wondering about him when he was a patient. May God bless you all with continued strength, wisdom, patience and health to continue caring for our loved ones.
- Thank you all for all you do for others. You’re Awesome! We have only the best here in Sioux City!
- I was in that unit, and they were the absolute best people. I couldn’t have asked for better nurses, they went above and beyond to help and make me comfortable while I was there.
- I can’t say enough how much I appreciated and always will, the staff at MercyOne when I was in the emergency department as well as hospitalized on the COVID floor. MercyOne is second to none!
- See more...

MercyOne Clinton
MercyOne Des Moines
MercyOne Dubuque
MercyOne North Iowa
MercyOne Northeast Iowa
MercyOne Siouxland
This Thanksgiving, the best thanks you can give a health care worker is to wear a mask.

Read and share this opinion editorial featured in the Des Moines Register and other Iowa papers written by MercyOne leaders and placed by your public relations departments.

SAFE HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

While nothing is risk free, some activities are safer than others when it comes to COVID-19. See guidance to help you plan a safe Thanksgiving.

BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY

Black Friday and traditional holiday shopping with crowded stores is no longer just uncomfortable but can also put you at risk of COVID-19. You can’t eliminate all risk, but you can lower it by following these safety measures.

IS IT COVID-19, THE FLU OR A COLD?

Because these illnesses have some similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference. However, it is important to understand which virus you or your loved ones may be impacted by. Read more >
This is what Personalized Care looks like to us...

We were each visiting with a patient following his TAVR procedure, and he told each of us about having COVID-19 in September. He spent two weeks in our medical unit, and he spoke so highly of his nurse. He told us about how she would sit and talk with him, hold his hand, call his wife with updates and help facilitate calls with his family. She made such an incredible impact on him that he said she will forever be part of his family.

~ Cindy Rowley and Anna Schaub, intensive care unit, MercyOne Dubuque

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

Several nurses of MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), along with “The Preemie Project” organization, brought giant smiles to the faces of loved ones of our tiniest patients in late October by making costumes in celebration of Halloween.

These are just a few examples of costumes made for babies at MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center’s NICU.

This is what Innovate looks like...

The MercyOne Air Med team from Siouxland helped another local EMS squad complete landing zone training in November. The North Sioux City, South Dakota Fire and Rescue squad gathered on the evening of Nov. 4 to learn how to safely prepare for a medical helicopter landing.

The training, offered to any area emergency medical services team, is vital in ensuring a safe landing and patient transfer in the case that air care is needed at the scene of an emergency. Landing zone training is offered for free to these communities, and it’s the part of the job that Air Med Manager Nik Gonzales likes most.

“It’s part of our mission to ensure that our EMS providers across our region have the education and training they need. We’re all in the business of saving lives, and it’s this teamwork that makes that possible,” says Gonzales.

This is what Personalized Care looks like to... 

This past month the physical therapy dog in MercyOne Northeast Iowa, Rose, had her litter of puppies. Rose is a hardworking dog who provides support for our patients at Kimball Ridge Center. Her eight puppies will go to Retrieving Freedom where they’ll be trained to be service or therapy dogs, just like Rose!

Dr. Cristina Pasarin was working with a MercyOne Northeast Iowa patient who had to have a procedure, but he could not move forth as he had no transportation. Dr. Pasrin picked up the patient at his home and brought him in for treatment.
This is what Personalized Care looks like:

Nursing colleagues on the 8SW inpatient unit at MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center were honored with the ‘Tyler Trophy’ for their top consumer experience scores for the second straight month.

The traveling trophy is awarded each month to the nursing unit with the highest Press Ganey scores for consumer experience and is used to honor growth and improvement within our nursing teams.

The ‘Tyler Trophy’ is named for beloved MercyOne Siouxland nurse Tyler Big Bow following his passing. Tyler exemplified our cultural belief of providing Personalized Care, with a smile.

This is what Personalize Care and Own It! look like to me...

**Jodi Hartsock**, a staff nurse in the Maternal Child department at Mercy Iowa City, an affiliate of MercyOne, received the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses! DAISY Award recipients are nominated for outstanding excellence in patient care, and ensuring patients are treated with compassion and kindness. Her nomination read: “She made me feel like I was the only person on the unit, and that it was okay whatever decision I made for my child. I knew my child was in great hands with her, and I had no doubt in my mind on the care he was receiving.”

Jodi is just part of the amazing team in Maternal Child and her ability to interact with our patients is only one of the reasons we are not surprised to see her receive this honor.

~ Danielle Holbrook, Director of Maternal Child

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

Van Diest Family Health Clinic, an affiliate of MercyOne, provider **Darin Eklund**, PA-C, was the caregiver to give a patient the horrible news that her yearly mammogram came back abnormal. Knowing the urgency, he scheduled an appointment for the patient at MercyOne Des Moines for a biopsy the next week. The lumpectomy confirmed she indeed had breast cancer that had spread to her lymph nodes.

The patient was extremely appreciative of Darin’s care stating, “Darin was very compassionate and reassuring that I would beat this. On the day of my surgery, I received a hilarious text from him that put a smile on my face during an extremely scary time. He has continued to be supportive as I complete all of my chemo and radiation. I’m very lucky to call him my provider and friend.”

Darin is a shining example of providing personalized and compassionate care to his patients every day.
This is what Personalized Care looks like to me...

Kathy Shaffer was ‘second to none’ when she had triple bypass surgery at MercyOne North Iowa Heart Center. Kathy had no idea that she had any heart problems, until the morning of Sept. 3 when she ended up in the ED, and it was discovered she had seven blocked arteries and needed a triple bypass surgery.

Kathy and Dr. Dante Dali, the cardiothoracic surgeon, connected right away, “I felt confident with him. He was very attentive, and after surgery checked on me 2-3 times a day,” said Kathy.

Dr. Dali went out of his way to make Kathy feel comfortable while in his care – he even ordered pizza for Kathy and the team to ensure she would have an appetite!

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

MercyOne Northeast Iowa hosted three Free Mammo nights this month. The event was for women ages 40 and older who have cost-barriers to receiving their yearly mammogram. 20 women attended across the three nights; five identified as having dense breast tissue and two were identified as high-risk. All of those who attended were also taught breast self-examination practices.

This is what Be ONE and Personalize Care look like to me...

Recently, we were preparing to release one of our patients from the Mercy Iowa City ICU, an affiliate of MercyOne, and send him home, but the patient had a final request before discharge: a wedding ceremony. Thanks to quick work from our colleagues behind the scenes, the patient and his wife were married in front of a very small group in his room, led by John Bennett, MD, who served as the officiant. It was incredibly moving to see a provider and the great colleagues in the department work together to provide an unforgettable experience for the newlywed couple and their family before going home.

~ Jan Copeland, BSN, RN, hospital practice manager

This is what Improve Daily and Personalized Care looks like to me:

Ken Andrews, age 70, contracted the COVID-19 virus in late September and spent 10+ days in our care. After being released mid-October Ken wrote the following letter to Rod Schlader:

“I want you to know I received excellent care while I was in your facility. My doctors, nurses, aides, PT and everyone who administered care or took blood were all awesome. I could not have asked for any better care than I received. They were caring, positive, encouraging and challenged me each day to work to get better. My wife especially appreciated the phone calls keeping her updated.

I hope you share my letter with the staff – they are the best. They saved my life, and I will be forever be grateful. The MercyOne respiratory people were also excellent in getting me set up with my home oxygen needs. I continue to recover at home, and I have gained back 10 pounds of the 30 pounds I lost. Again, I want you to know you have a great staff.”
This is what Personalized Care looks like to me:

A patient has been dealing with several health issues and went to doctors for more than a year with no resolution – often made to feel it’s all in her head. Her daughter went to a health presentation in Chicago on the topic of Hashimoto’s disease. The patient exhibited 27 of the 28 symptoms. She visited with a MercyOne nurse who knew of another patient being seen by Dr. Lydia Mustafic for the same issue.

The patient visited with the nurse and explained her desperate desire to get in, and they found a way to take her on as a new patient. She raved about Dr. Mustafic: she listened, believed her and was very caring. She ordered the tests and the diagnosis was confirmed, and the doctor even called on a Saturday with the news. She has adjusted her diet and follows the directions given – it has changed her life!

This is what Personalized Care looks like to me:

Recently, Mom’s Meals extended their occupational health partnership with MercyOne to their Grinnell location in addition to their Ankeny and South Des Moines locations. With over 200 employees in Grinnell, this represents a huge opportunity for MercyOne to expand our opportunities in the Newton area.

The reason for their expansion was the tremendous experience they have received in dealing with our clinics in Des Moines. As the Mom’s Meals human resources leader in Grinnell said, “We’ve heard a lot of good things about MercyOne Occupational Health.”

This is what Personalize Care and Own It! look like to me...

Mercy Iowa City, an affiliate of MercyOne, partnered to host six free, mobile COVID-19 testing clinics in some of the more rural areas of our region. While we saw a strong turnout at the first five stops, our final clinic in Muscatine was by far the most attended. Led by Susan Elder, clinic operations director, Patty Maxwell, health coach, Veronica O’Sullivan, RN; Doug Stahl, health promotions; and Jody Gunn, RN, BSN, the clinic in Muscatine tested more people in three hours than in the previous five clinics combined! The team stayed beyond the scheduled closing time to ensure every person in line (a line that surrounded the Mercy Family Medicine clinic building) was tested. They served many people in an incredibly valuable effort to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19, and I was blown away by the teamwork, positive attitude and high-quality attention to detail each one of these colleagues showed.

~ Aaron Scheinblum, communication strategist
This is what Improve Daily looks like...

MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center unveiled its new registration center Nov. 16. The area now features three stations for patient check-in, including a wheelchair accessible counter, and privacy dividers.

The renovation is the culmination of an overnight process change during the spring COVID-19 surge during which the medical center changed its main patient entrance, redirecting all visitors to its most central location to improve safety. Patient Access colleagues worked quickly to adapt to their make-shift registration area, while a plan for permanent changes was designed.

The finished product was designed, built and installed by our own colleagues, creating a beautiful and functional space to better serve patients.

This is what Innovate looks like to me...

Van Diest Medical Center, an affiliate of MercyOne, hosts a fun Community Trick-or-Treat Halloween Event each year in October. Due to the current pandemic, this year, with some innovation from the team, the event was turned into a Drive-Thru Trick-or-Treat!

More than 150 children attended the drive-thru event and were able to safely receive their treats this Halloween. Colleagues also had a great time dressing up for the kids, with masks and face coverings included in their costumes of course. This event brought great team and community engagement during a difficult time for all.

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

MercyOne Waterloo Foundation received a $6,800 gift for COVID-19 relief efforts. The gift comes from Waterloo Community Foundation’s First Responders Fund and will specifically help provide surgical masks for patients, families, visitors, colleagues and providers at MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center. Public and private donations and proceeds from t-shirt and watercolor prints by Waterloo artist Michael Broshar, depicting our first responders, generated the funds for this gift to MercyOne.

“We knew our community is caring and supportive, but we were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support expressed by so many community members. Every gift is being accepted with gratitude,” said Waterloo Foundation Board Chair Wilfred Johnson. “We couldn’t be more thankful to our first responders and to our donors.”

Waterloo Community Foundation also donated five framed First Responder prints that are now hanging within MercyOne Waterloo Medical Center.

We are here to support you!

Care Circle team members are available in each region. Contact Spiritual Care to coordinate.

We also have several NEW VIDEOS to help you take a break by trying a new recipe or work out.
This is what Be ONE looks like to me...

MercyOne Dubuque and MercyOne Dyersville colleagues honored those who have served our country with a reflection and singing of the National Anthem at our flag poles on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

MercyOne Dyersville colleagues safely gathered at the flag pole as nutrition colleague Sue Hoeger sang the National Anthem. Beside her were fellow colleagues and veterans Mike Ronnenberg (plant engineering) and Brent Salow (nutrition).

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

Increased patient volumes due to the COVID-19 pandemic often means long days for our MercyOne colleagues, as they may be unable to get away from the unit during their shift. As part of the MercyOne Colleague Care Circle program, MercyOne Central Iowa leadership met staff where they were with carts of free healthy snacks, self-care items and spiritual resources. By rounding on colleagues to provide relief and relaxation, the carts and their hosts reinforced MercyOne leaders’ mindfulness of the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of those we serve with every day.

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

MercyOne Cedar Falls Medical Center normally hosts a Halloween Party for the second graders from Hansen Elementary School. Hansen Elementary School has been our Partner in Education for more than 20 years.

An average of 80 students usually visit the hospital just before Halloween each year in their fun costumes and collect candy from the decorated departments and costumed colleagues.

Unfortunately, the party could not be held this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This tradition has a special place in the heart of Dorothy Fleshner, who works in environmental services. In past years, Dorothy has enjoyed decorating a "scary hallway" for the students to walk through. This year, as a safer option and to make sure we did something for the students, Dorothy assembled individual Trick-or-Treat goodie bags for the students.
Quality

ALL CAUSE UNPLANNED 30-DAY READMISSION

This is what Be ONE looks like…

Angie Keegan has been named the new manager of patient food and nutrition for MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center. Angie is a graduate of Iowa State University, and has worked as a clinical dietitian and in food service management throughout her career, including 11 years ago at MercyOne. In her free time, she enjoys supporting her three children with their activities as well as camping, boating and traveling with her spouse Chris.

This is what Own It! looks like to me…

MercyOne Waterloo Cancer Center and MercyOne Waterloo Breast Center have both received three years of accreditation through the Commission on Cancer. Accredited facilities must meet 34 Commission on Cancer quality care standards and maintain a level of excellence in the delivery of comprehensive patient-centered care. Our colleagues go above and beyond every day to provide a complete circle of care for our patients.

This is what Be ONE and Own It! look like to me…

Recently two Mercy Iowa City colleagues were recognized for their outstanding treatment by a patient after they were discharged. Andrea Herman, a staff nurse, and Kile Stroughmatt, nursing technician, were recognized by the patient with a donation to the Mercy Hospital Foundation in their honor. “While I was in the hospital… both Andrea and Kile went beyond their regular duty to take care of all of my needs,” the patient wrote.

Andrea and Kile truly showcase what it means to provide high quality, Personalize Care, and ensure our patients continue to have a positive experience when they receive treatment at Mercy Iowa City, an affiliate of MercyOne.

~ Michelle Marks, Mercy Hospital Foundation

This is what Improve Daily looks like to me…

One of our surgeons made a quality improvement suggestion we have implemented in the OR. Posting a sign notifying staff that a total joint procedure is in process helps decrease traffic in the OR, leading to better quality of care for the patient.

~ Hillary Engbers, surgical services manager

This is what Be ONE and Own It! look like to me…

MercyOne Des Moines and Mercy Iowa City, an affiliate of MercyOne, have been recognized as Top 50 Cardiovascular Hospitals by IBM Watson Health for outstanding performance. Both have focused significant efforts to promote and enhance such an important service line and it is our continued goal to stand out and highlight our strongest commitment to provide the best patient experience with our incredible teams.

This most recent recognition solidified MercyOne Iowa Heart Center’s cardiovascular services as a pivotal piece in achieving our Mission to continue to improve the health of the communities we serve.
This is what Improve Daily looks like to me...

The radiology department at MercyOne Elkader Medical Center recently purchased a digital radiography (DR) mobile x-ray unit. Upgrading this equipment decreased the exam time, decreased the radiation doses for the patient and improved the image quality. Additionally, the DR mobile x-ray unit instantly views the images in the ER or patient room through an integrated LCD monitor and can also be sent out from either location. This reduces the amount of times colleagues need to don and doff PPE.

This is what Own It! looks like...

Dr. Adriane Argenio is among 2,125 Initiates from around the world who became Fellows of the American College of Surgeons (FACS) at the College’s virtual annual Clinical Congress. Dr. Argenio was one of six Iowans in this year’s class and the only MercyOne provider. Dr. Argenio is currently practicing at MercyOne Waterloo General Surgery with strong professional interest in hernia repair and robotic surgery, and holds memberships in other professional societies, including Association of Women Surgeons, Iowa Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, Gold Humanism Honor Society, and Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society.

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

In just 30 minutes, Jennifer Mackie positively impacted the experience of three patients in MercyOne Central Iowa serving as a virtual pharmacist for the clinics.

First was a patient that could not afford her insulin. This was caught by a health coach, who then contacted the virtual pharmacist. Jen was able find the patient a much cheaper alternative.

Second was a COPD patient that could also not afford his medications. Again, Jen was able to find the patient equivalent medications that are less expensive.

The third patient was discharged 10 days prior and does not speak English. He was prescribed a full regimen of complex COPD medications. When the paramedic program was checking on him, they found that he could not afford any of his medications. Jen was able to coordinate getting the medications for this patient and was able to do education regarding the use of all the medications. This patient would have otherwise suffered in silence and likely been a readmission.

Nominations can be submitted online at greatnurses.org. The deadline is Dec. 31, 2020.
Medicare open enrollment is now open

Medicare’s annual enrollment period runs through Dec. 7. Remind family and friends who are 65 and older to enroll and consider Medigold, a new MercyOne partner. Visit MediGold.com or call 1-800-964-4525 to learn more.

This is what Innovate looks like to me...

A woman, who was scheduled for joint replacement surgery with another provider the very next day, was discussing the procedure with her sister. The woman’s sister said that she should really have Dr. Silvia perform the surgery because robotic-assisted surgery is the best option.

The women Googled it and was served MercyOne Dubuque’s robotic-assisted joint replacement ad.

She called the number and spoke with community education nurse Michelle Arensdorf, who talked with her about the procedure and then connected her with Dr. Silvia’s office to make an appointment. The woman canceled her surgery with the other provider and instead scheduled her surgery to be done at MercyOne with Dr. Silvia.

Ambulatory Growth

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

MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center reached out to Dr. Mark Mulkey, a plastic and reconstructive surgeon at MercyOne North Iowa, regarding a patient. Dr. Mulkey consulted with the patient and the team in Des Moines and avoided transporting the patient while ensuring they received exceptional care.

This is what Innovate looks like to me...

MercyOne North Iowa Heart Center is now seeing patients in Albert Lea, Minnesota. The Albert Lea community is thrilled to have MercyOne serving southern Minnesota!

Dr. Samuel Congello, cardiologist, and Jennifer Long, certified medical assistant, at MercyOne North Iowa Heart Center.
New Colleagues

MercyOne Population Health Services Organization welcomes Lori Galioto and Jody Gray

MercyOne Population Health Services Organization (PHSO) welcomes Lori Galioto, RN, MSN, CNL, CPHQ, as grant development manager. Lori will write, coordinate and complete grant applications to further the work of population health services. She will also manage projects and coordinate grants received. Previously, Lori was with the Iowa Healthcare Collaborative and worked as health coach and nurse at MercyOne.

Jody Gray recently joined the MercyOne PHSO as provider network manager. In her new role, Jody leads development of a clinically-integrated and high-performing MercyOne Partnered Provider Network to improve population health for MercyOne members. She will work to build adequacy, access, and quality standards. Previously Jody worked as the associate director of Integrity & Compliance for MercyOne Central Iowa.

Kaity Tritz joins MercyOne Siouxland as home medical equipment manager

Kaity Tritz, BSRT(R) on her new role as home medical equipment manager for MercyOne Siouxland Medical Center.

Kaity has been part of the MercyOne team for more than four years, most recently working as lead radiologic technologist in our radiology department. She also has experience working at several of our clinics, including MercyOne Singing Hills Family Medicine and Urgent Care, South Sioux City and Akron.

Kaity earned her associates degree in radiologic technology from St. Luke’s College before finishing her bachelor of science at Briar Cliff University. She is currently pursuing a Master’s of Healthcare Administration from Bellevue University.

When she’s not working, Kaity stays busy with her four children and loves cheering on her favorite football
Our Key Results focus our work as well as measure performance and progress toward our Vision to set the standard as a personalized and radically convenient system of health services.

System–wide progress on the Key Results is featured here each month. To view your region’s progress, see your local communications.

**Consumer Experience**
Percent of consumers who would recommend MercyOne to their friends or family

**Team Engagement**
Commitment each colleague gives each day to help our patients – and each other – live their best life.

**Quality**
The percent of patients who come back to any hospital within 30 days after being treated for a heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, lung disease, or hip and knee replacement.

**Financial Performance**
Think of financial performance like a check book. At the end of the month we must have more than what we spend to fund benefit programs, raises, invest in facilities and clinical and non-clinical equipment.

**Ambulatory Growth**
Non–hospital visits, including telehealth, emergency department, outpatient surgery, physical therapy, physician offices, clinics and home care.

**Share Focused Stories** of how colleagues and providers are working to achieve our Key Results at www.MercyOne.org/Culture for a chance to win. Winners will be selected each week and featured in system–wide communications, including the monthly System Newsletter and bi-weekly MercyOne Update e–newsletter.