MercyOne making headlines

One year later, MercyOne continues to help educate and inform about the COVID-19 pandemic.

It’s been a year since the first COVID-19 positive patient sought care at MercyOne. Since that time, our experts have been a source of knowledge and reassurance for our community, participating in hundreds of interviews with local, regional, state and national media outlets.

Serving as thought leaders and subject matter experts continues, as the pandemic moves from treatment to prevention. Listed below are just a few recent media interviews conducted with MercyOne Central Iowa colleagues.

- **“COVID-19 Vaccinations and Mammograms: What Iowa Women Need to Know,”** WHO-TV, March 2, featuring Trish Steenhoek, breast imaging navigator, MercyOne Comfort Health Center for Women

- **“How Monoclonal Antibodies are Helping Prevent Hospitalizations Among Iowa COVID-19 Patients,”** Des Moines Register, Feb. 26, featuring Dr. Casey Rice

- **Des Moines Business Record’s, “Fearless Friday” virtual event was held on Feb. 26,** and features Dr. Aneesa Afroz; the panel discussion focused on various health care topics, including the COVID-19 pandemic, sexual assault and the Black maternal mortality crisis

- **“Honoring Black History: Iowa Black Medical Professionals Share Stories of Fighting on the Front Lines of COVID,”** WHO-TV, Feb. 10, featuring Dr. Patrick Oben

Also in the news...

Nate Evans, husband of MercyOne Children’s Hospital NICU Nursing Director Rachel Evans, made national headlines for building desks for school-age children who are learning remotely during the pandemic. Check out the Evans family’s story on Good Morning America and CBS News.
MercyOne Integrity & Compliance  Sticky scenario: Is sharing caring?

Nurse Jena is caring for a patient who is in custody of a prison. The patient is ready for discharge. The police call the hospital and ask to speak to Jena. The officer wants to know when the patient will be discharged, and if the patient is positive for COVID-19. What can Jena tell the police officer?

Because the patient is in custody of a prison, Jena may share with the police when the patient is ready for discharge in order to coordinate the patient’s return to the correctional facility. In addition, Jena may share the patient’s COVID-19 status because such information is necessary to protect those transporting the patient, to treat the prisoner at the correctional facility, and to safeguard others at the correctional facility. (NOTE: This answer would be the same if the patient were under arrest.)

Knowing when it is okay to disclose information to law enforcement can be confusing. If you are unsure, contact MercyOne Central Iowa’s Legal or Integrity & Compliance/Privacy team. In addition, check out the following resources, available on the Integrity & Compliance/Privacy community page on the MercyOne Central Iowa intranet:

- Law Enforcement Matrix – Sets forth a number of scenarios in an easy-to-read format and provides guidance on what information may be disclosed in each scenario. The matrix provides specific guidance on the release of mental health and substance use disorder information.
- “What to Do When the Cops Show Up...” – Presented during a recent lunch and learn session, this PowerPoint provides an overview of permissible disclosures to law enforcement and case scenarios to help you test your knowledge. A recording of the lunch and learn is also available.

Thank you for your partnership in compliance.

Reflect, renew, reboot

As a health care ministry, we are called to be prepared for emergent situations. However, we could not have anticipated the impact COVID-19 would have on us, our colleagues, and those we love. Throughout the last year, the MercyOne Colleague Circle of Care initiative has worked to meet the many needs accompanying the pandemic.

This week, the one year milestone was marked with a series of special events and surprises, designed to support colleagues and encourage them to reflect, to laugh, to relax, and to sacredly remember all who felt the impact of the pandemic.

National Patient Safety Week
March 14–20, 2021

The recognition of National Patient Safety Week provides an opportunity for all MercyOne colleagues to keep our goal in mind: zero events of preventable harm. All MercyOne colleagues are encouraged to think about how we keep patients safe on a daily basis, such as: using two patient identifiers; making efforts to prevent falls; and practicing good hand hygiene.

Take the Safety Pledge: “I pledge to implement and follow practices that increase the safety of our patients and team. I am personally committed to practice our SafetyFirst error prevention techniques and incorporate them into my daily work habits.”

Do you have a question about safety? Talk to a MercyOne safety coach, contact a member of the SafetyFirst Core Team, or email lkennedy@mercydesmoines.org.