August 20, 2020

Dear Volunteers,

We have missed all of you! However, we have taken, and will continue to take a cautious approach, always placing the highest priority on the health and safety of our volunteers, patients and our community. With that in mind, I want to share that in conjunction with Bon Secours Richmond Market Incident Command, St. Francis leadership and in accordance with CDC guidelines, **the decision has been made to gradually begin the process of phasing in the return of volunteers 60 and older.**

**Phase 2** has been approved to start phasing in volunteers of all ages with no underlying health conditions as listed in the CDC guidelines. (such as active cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, serious heart conditions, sickle cell disease, Type 2 diabetes, etc.). Volunteers with questions related to their own health conditions should consult with their physician to get clearance prior to returning to service.

Placements being rolled out in Phase 2 have been determine by our Market Incident Command to be low to medium risk. St. Francis approved placements are:

* + Cancer Center Info Desk
  + General Services
  + Gift shop
  + Information Desk (including Cancer Center)
  + Main/Ambulatory Assistant
  + Patient Access
  + Pre-admission testing
  + Surgery waiting

At this point in time Volunteer services recommends against utilizing volunteers in any placements in the Emergency Dept or any of the inpatient units (to include but not limited to ED, Fall Safety Volunteers, Unit Assistants, Spiritual Care Partners, Eucharistic Ministers, Patient Response Volunteers, Volunteer Patient Advocates). These placements are considered higher risk placements and will not be rolled out until Phase 3 is approved. Rosary volunteers are also excluded since almost all of these individuals are considered visitors since they have not been screened, oriented or received TB clearance. St. Francis still has in place a strict 1 approved visitor per patient policy in place.

All volunteers wishing to return will be required to complete a COVID-19 procedure training. This will be accomplished through a Zoom presentation and/or printed Power Point packet training material which they will reviewwith staff. After the training is completed, they will also be required to review and return a signed Volunteer Return to Service Agreement before they will be cleared to volunteer.

The proposed timeline will be as follows:

* + **Week of August 24th -** Communications regarding the plan for return to service will be sent to all volunteers who have indicated on their survey that they would like to return as soon as possible. This communication will include scheduled Zoom trainings sessions which they can select from
  + **Sept. 9-24 -**A series of training sessions on COVID-19 procedures will be conducted
  + **Week of Sept 28th –** Gradual Phase 2 rollout of volunteers returning service beginning with General Service volunteers during the first week.
  + **Week of October 5th –** Begin roll out of other Phase 2 placements.

It is important to know that all timelines will remain fluid as we make continuous assessments on department and organizational needs, as well as considering the health and wellness of volunteers and the community. One thing we have all learned throughout this pandemic is that the situation changes continually. As I mentioned previously, those of you who answered that they are willing to return as soon as possible, will receive a letter next week with important information about next steps. However, if you have changed your mind since you completed the survey and no longer want to return immediately OR if you indicated you did not want to return but now feel comfortable returning, please email me as soon as possible. Also, for those of you willing to return right away, but work in a higher risk placement, let us know if you might be interested in working in another area of need. **If you have not yet completed your survey, please do as soon as possible so we can determine how many of you will be returning.**  Lastly, we want to make you aware that scheduling of placements may be different, and some positions may be redesigned due to COVID-related procedures that are going on at the Hospital. We ask for your flexibility so that we can be able to best serve all and keep everyone safe.

**Most importantly**, the decision to return to volunteer is your individual determination. Each of us must make the decision that is best for our own personal health, safety and comfort. We respect, honor and support your decision.

Karen and I really look forward to seeing those of you who want to return soon. You have made such a difference here in the past and your help will be so appreciated!

Warmest regards,

***Dede Foerster, M.Ed., Director***

***Volunteer Services***

***Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center|***