



Dear Tulane Health System colleagues,

I am pleased to start the new week with a bit of good news. We have recently obtained [new technology](#) that allows us to test for COVID-19 in-house and receive results in as little as five minutes. We are able to deploy this technology in our downtown ER, at Tulane Lakeside Hospital, at the Tulane Cancer Center and in our Tulane Multispecialty LaSalle Clinic. This means we can now test all inpatient admissions for COVID-19 – even those who have no symptoms – providing a new, additional layer of protection for our staff and patients.

The speed of this new testing capability – which was granted emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration late last week – also lets us quickly know which patients are and are not COVID-positive. Out of necessity, we've treated pending patients as COVID-positive and followed those protocols to keep everyone safe. This will significantly reduce the number of patients whose results are pending, which in turn, helps us conserve PPE use and other resources.

The new tests, combined with previous enhanced testing capabilities we developed last week, are enabling us to provide COVID-19 testing to first responders like our EMS and police partners, and we are also discussing how we can work with other hospitals – both locally and in other regions – to assist them with rapid testing, as well.

Please join me in thanking our laboratory team, our ER team and many others for helping implement and test this game-changing technology over the weekend.

Please note – colleagues who are symptomatic still need to follow our process for employee testing and first call employee health to schedule a test. And our ER should remain reserved for patients whose symptoms are significant and may require hospitalization.

I know you've seen the news that this week is expected to be a difficult one for our region and nation. I fear it will be. But I also have hope that we can turn this tide through innovations like this – and the constant bravery, compassion and skill of you and your teams.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert Lynch

CEO

Tulane Health System