

From: [Dr. Ramon Parsons](#)
To: [MSArchives](#)
Subject: A message about COVID-19
Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020 3:44:10 PM



Dear TCI Community,

Let me start by thanking you for your commitment during this very challenging time. We are in the midst of unprecedented uncertainty. Everything we are used to doing is on hold. We have had to ramp down our cancer research, even though cancer has not gone away. We have had to delay and modify treatment of our patients, balancing the benefits of adhering to standard treatment protocols with new safety concerns. And, we are working remotely, distanced from colleagues and missing the stimulation of interaction.

However, in spite of the new SARS CoV2 virus, we are forging ahead. At TCI, we are in crash course mode, learning about corona virus virology and devising experimental approaches to combat the virus. Our clinical professionals are bravely taking care of COVID-19 positive patients, while facing a rapidly increasing volume of critically ill patients (as of yesterday afternoon, we have 1,629 COVID-19 positive patients in our hospitals, including 309 in ICUs, and an additional 114 under investigation). Many TCI members are being redeployed to the front line in the hospital. Our number one priority is to care for patients and develop treatment interventions and preventive measures that will contribute to saving lives. A very special thanks to our physicians, nurses, and other patient care specialists who are putting their own lives at risk to help others. And, tremendous thanks to Dr. Luis Isola, Dr. Cardinale Smith, Dr. Tsao Kai, and Dr. Elisa Port who are so ably managing our cancer clinical care operations, and to Dr. William Oh who is managing Hem/Onc coverage with sensitivity to optimal patient care and physician expertise.

As you know, a temporary field hospital has been built in Central Park, directly

across Fifth Avenue from our campus. The hospital ship Comfort has docked in Manhattan and is ready to receive non-COVID-19 positive patients, as is the Javits Center.

The Mount Sinai Hospital is constructing new patient pods in select public spaces, including the Guggenheim Pavilion West and Center lobbies and the Annenberg West lobby. An inpatient unit for non-COVID-19 positive, low-acuity cancer patients on the fourth floor of Rutenbergl opened this morning.

Our PPE supply remains intact for the moment; read this [piece](#) from *The New York Times*.

Now, let me turn to information reminders and updates.

- Beginning on April 7, we will reconvene our TCI seminar series at noon on Tuesdays. This restoration of some semblance of normalcy will surely be welcome.
- Remember to **complete the [Volunteer Form](#)** if you have not already done so (thanks to those who have already completed it). Everyone who does not have a risk factor and who has not already been reassigned will be redeployed when needed to perform a COVID19-related duty based on system requirements. While research faculty and staff working on COVID-19 or cancer clinical trials or basic research focusing on COVID-19 are exempt from redeployment at this time, they are encouraged to volunteer.

Students, please refer to the email sent by “Workforce, Student” on March 26.

- Be sure to read the daily Broadcast Notifications.
- Check the [Staff Resources](#) page frequently for the latest updates.
- If you have recently recovered from COVID-19, please volunteer to have your blood tested to see if you have high levels of antibodies. You can complete and submit this [form](#).
- Accrual to most cancer clinical trials has been suspended. Only 19 trials are open to accrual at this time. If you have any questions, contact [Dr. Karyn Goodman](#).
- If you missed Monday’s Town Hall with Dr. David Reich and Dr. Dennis Charney, you can find it [here](#).
- Remember that media requests must be vetted in advance by the Press Office. Contact Marlene Naanes at 929-237-5802 or marlene.naanes@mountsinai.org.

To all members of our TCI community, thank you for your professionalism and answering the call to duty. All the best to you and your families, and stay healthy.

My best to all,
Ramon

Ramon Parsons, MD, PhD
Director, The Tisch Cancer Institute

The Tisch Cancer Institute

April 2, 2020 communication

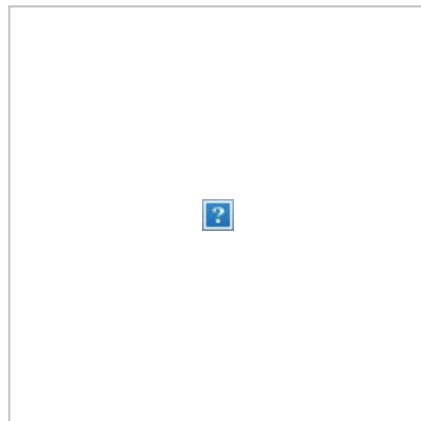


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