



SMH IM Residency Program: some responses to COVID-19

Treatment Task Force:

Led by Dr. Karen Hamad, this multi-disciplinary group, inclusive of selected residents, faculty, hospital leadership and pharmacy meet weekly to identify best practices, create and update SMH COVID-19 treatment protocols and order sets, and additional system improvement opportunities. Residents are charged to review the medical literature under the direction of Dr.

Alan King, whom oversees our Journal Club and Dr. Rishin Handa, inpatient Chief Medical Resident. Changes to COVID treatment protocols are made in real time. Recommendations from this taskforce are disseminated to all physicians treating COVID-19 patients, as well as the larger SMH staff via daily updates. This group also provides input and recommendations to the Research Task Force to help drive clinical trial initiatives at the healthcare system level.

Research Task Force: Led by Dr. Robert Smith, Dr. Wiese-Rometsch, Dr. Kirk Voelker and Dr. Manuel Gordillo, and in collaboration with the Treatment Task Force, identifies opportunities to conduct treatment protocols. Several residents are participating in cutting edge research pertaining to COVID. Sarasota Memorial joined two national clinical trials related to the treatment of COVID-19. The first study is testing the antiviral drug remdesivir; while the second trial is evaluating the use of plasma donated by people who have recovered from COVID-19 to treat current patients. The convalescent plasma study is a clinical trial that is coordinated with the Mayo Clinic to evaluate whether the antibodies in plasma from patients who have recovered from COVID-19 can help newly infected patients. SMH partnered with the Suncoast Blood Centers, which collects and provides the donated plasma for this FDA-approved trial. Residents collaborate with the SMH Clinical Research Team to help gather data to conduct this research. The program facilitated an IRB submission for this study. Dr. Caitlin Bass, PGY-3 resident and Dr. Kevin Dawkins, PGY-2 resident are responsible for identifying and enrolling eligible patients. Thus far, three patients have received this life-saving treatment. Additionally, PGY-1 Resident Dr. Natalia Lattanzio and other residents are conducting COVID-19 outcomes research. Selected residents present their findings to the SMH Leadership COVID-19 Taskforce.

Community Involvement: The Sarasota Memorial Internal Medicine Practice at Newtown, residency clinic, continues to make efforts to provide the best care to patients during the pandemic:

Patient Care: The practice remains open Monday-Thursday and offers telemedicine, acute care for established patients, and phone consultation. Patients are provided medication refills for up to 3 months to avoid non-urgent visits. Patients that meet CDC criteria for COVID-19 testing have been sent to drive through testing. Transition of Medicine Care patients have been evaluated in the office to provide them necessary medication (i.e. insulin, anticoagulation, etc.). When patients are seen in the clinic they are provided a surgical mask (while supplies are available).

Pharmacy Collaboration: The residency continues to have a pharmacist on site for patient education and through association with Good Samaritan Pharmacy, specified patients are able to get their medications. A neighbor, Good Will, has provided space to distribute medications.

Legal Aid: Through partnership with Legal Aid Manasota, the program continues to provide legal counseling for issues that impact health (now via phone).

Patient Education: Residents and faculty continue to educate their patients in prevention strategies for COVID-19 inclusive of in clinic education, and by phone about good hygiene and social distancing.