

ESSENTIAL CLEANING AND HOUSEKEEPING TO FIGHT THE VIRUS, KEEP EVERYONE SAFE

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My Role: My supervisor title has honestly gone away. I actually have to do more of the physical work – like cleaning and taking out the trash – because it's all hands-on deck now. I was mentally prepared for it already because I know what it takes and how to get the job done. I was a housekeeper before, so I know where all the supplies are located and how to go about cleaning. It wasn't something new to me since I've been in the department for 16 and a half years.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, we've routinely had staff members who have been unable to come to work because they're sick. But even if I'm short on staff, our patients always come first. That mentality has prepared me for this type of pandemic situation. I'll do whatever it takes to keep our patients safe.

My Toughest Day: I was doing all the housekeeping work by myself covering three different areas of the ED. As I was cleaning the trauma room, I saw that we were losing many patients. If you're not mentally and physically strong to take it, it does affect you. But I was prepared for this situation by being on the Emergency Management Assistance Team (EMAT) and being at the hospital

for so many years. That was one of my worst days, but nobody would know because I always had a smile on my face.

What Keeps You Going: The thing that motivates me the most is that I love my job. That's why I do it. My mother, Jean Jonas, was a nurse at NYC Health + Hospitals/Coney Island for 19 years before she retired. My sister, Cindy Melvin, is also a nurse at NYC Health + Hospitals/Queens. What keeps me going is my staff and my patients. Once you get the job done and get it done the right way, there's a feeling of satisfaction.

Another one of my main responsibilities during this crisis is training our employees to

wear the PPE the right way. If they fail, then I didn't do my job in showing them the right way and the right steps. Every day as I wake up and come into work, I tell myself to be patient, take caution and do my best to show everyone the right way to protect themselves. That's what drives me to come to work.

Managing Stress: When this all happened, I started to eat healthier and exercising more. I've lost 25 pounds. It's helped to clean up my immune system. I feel lighter and better. I'm not as tired. I've been trying to go to bed earlier too. I have to prepare myself to get the job done. We have to keep the department running strong.

