

Five regional hospital partners approved to begin ramping up non-urgent care

Hospitals in Campbellford, Haliburton, Lindsay, Northumberland and Peterborough collaborating on gradual, phased approach to resuming non-urgent surgeries, procedures, and tests

(May 29, 2020) – Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH), Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS), Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH), Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC), and Ross Memorial Hospital (RMH) have now received formal approval from Ontario Health (OH) to move forward with a regional plan to begin resuming non-urgent surgeries, procedures and tests.

On March 19, under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, the government of Ontario directed all acute care hospitals to ramp down elective surgeries and non-urgent activities in order to preserve system capacity to deal effectively with COVID-19.

With provincial approval now received to proceed, the five partner hospitals will implement a staged plan beginning in early June that will allow each hospital to increase and decrease the amount of non-urgent care provided as circumstances allow.

Non-urgent care at each hospital will be resumed in a gradual, phased manner. It will be necessary to prioritize the most urgent patients, and at times, we may need to scale back on non-urgent care volumes again as COVID-19 activity in the region fluctuates.

As we ramp up, we will continue to partner with local public health officials to carefully monitor the level of disease activity in our communities and region. We will also be monitoring the sustainability of our supply chains, volumes of activity at each hospital, and the capacity of our community partners to support acute care, working together to meet the needs of our patients while keeping everyone safe.

We will also continue to monitor each patient's clinical urgency and health status while they wait for their surgery, procedure or test. As the ramp-up begins at each hospital, some patients will need to be prioritized while others will continue to wait. We are working hard to resume non-urgent care as quickly as possible.

Patients should continue to communicate with their physician's office while they wait for their surgery, procedure or test to be rescheduled. If you are a patient waiting for non-urgent hospital care and your symptoms change during this time, please let your doctor know.

"We are looking forward to gradually and carefully ramping up non-urgent diagnostics, such as ultrasound and post-surgical support programs such as physiotherapy in response to elective care and surgeries being offered by our hospital partners in the region," said Carolyn Plummer, President and CEO at Haliburton Highlands Health Services. "Patients will be prioritized based on risk and urgency and will be contacted by HHHS staff as spaces become available. I want to thank our community for their continued understanding as we work to meet the needs of our community while ensuring we maintain safety of staff and patients and have the capacity to respond to changes in local COVID-19 activity."

Many HHHS supportive programs (such as mental health services, specialized geriatric programs, diabetes education, hospice palliative care, and various community support services programs) have continued intake and support throughout COVID-19 with modified service delivery models by making enhanced use of telephone and virtual supports.

Haliburton Highlands Health Services is providing news, updates, information and resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic on its website at www.hhhs.ca and for additional community information www.Haliburtoncares.ca

For more information:

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