



March 20, 2020

The Nebraska Medical Association is calling upon all healthcare facilities in Nebraska to follow recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidance on delaying elective non-essential medical procedures, surgeries, and tests until the COVID-19 public health emergency has been lifted by Governor Ricketts.

It is critical that healthcare facilities and clinics begin to prepare for an influx of patients needing care during this outbreak, and these facilities should do all they can to preserve their supply of personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilators, and beds. This action will not only preserve equipment necessary to test and treat COVID-19, but will also free up our healthcare workforce to care for the patients who are most in need. Additionally, this action will help to limit the spread of COVID-19 by encouraging patients to stay home to protect others and at the same time limits their possible exposure to the virus in our facilities and clinics.

Nebraska's healthcare facilities should take into consideration patient risk factors, availability of beds, availability of PPE, and the urgency of the procedure when making the decision to delay procedures, surgeries, and tests. However, facilities should also take into consideration the protection, pacing, and potential fatigue of healthcare providers who will soon be called upon to treat an increase in COVID-19 patients. It is crucial that providers focus on addressing the most urgent cases and preserve resources needed for the COVID-19 response.

The Nebraska Medical Association remains committed to ensuring the health of all Nebraskans and these considerations are a priority during this outbreak response. We strongly urge facilities and clinics to do their part in preserving supplies and keeping non-emergent patients home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd E. Hlavaty, MD', is positioned above the printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Todd E. Hlavaty, MD
NMA President