

**Contact: Catherine Dewey**

*Public Information Officer*

231-330-5204

Catherine.dewey@mclaren.org

McLaren Northern Michigan has continued to provide exceptional, safe, and compassionate care to patients throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, McLaren Northern Michigan is beginning to look to the future to provide the care that had been deferred over the last six weeks or longer. As a result, McLaren has developed a roadmap to safely resume time-sensitive care, which includes clinical and testing protocols, further enhancements to safety for our staff and patients, prioritization of surgical cases that were postponed, personal protective equipment guidelines, and much more.

“At McLaren Northern Michigan we understand that safety is foremost in everyone’s minds during these unprecedented times,” said Andrew McDonagh, MD, Chief Medical Officer of McLaren Northern Michigan. “The safety of our medical staff, employees, and patients is always our top priority. We want to assure the patients seeking care at our facilities, that they are being treated in a safe environment by personnel who are adhering to the most current safety precautions.”

With the curve beginning to flatten, the hospital does understand that coronavirus will be present in our community for the foreseeable future. To ensure the safety of patients, McLaren Northern Michigan will begin to open services in a very controlled method with many safety measures in place including:

* Screening all patients, visitors, and our own staff for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before they enter our facilities. Anyone experiencing symptoms is prohibited from entering and is directed to the appropriate level of care.
* Establishing dedicated units where we are caring for COVID-19 positive and suspected positive patients.
* Testing patients prior to their procedure to identify those who are COVID-19 positive but not showing symptoms.
* Limiting seating in certain areas to create space between those waiting for care.
* Caregivers and support staff are wearing additional protective equipment to keep patients and themselves safe when providing care. McLaren is providing a mask to patients and encouraging visitors to bring their own personal mask. If visitors do not have a mask, one will be provided for them.
* Adding cleaning processes throughout our facilities to enhance our already robust sanitization protocols.
* Frequently updating our policies and procedures to reflect the latest information available from the CDC.

For more information about the safety precautions that McLaren is taking, please visit [www.mclaren.org/safecare](http://www.mclaren.org/safecare).

Patients who are waiting for a postponed surgery will begin receiving phone calls from their physicians in the coming weeks to set a reschedule date.