



From day one.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Medical Center To resume elective and non-urgent surgeries and procedures

Process to resume procedures will be gradual, taking extra precautions to ensure safety of patients, employees

MISSOULA, Mont. – (April 25, 2020) Community Medical Center **announced today that it is taking the appropriate steps to safely resume some elective and non-urgent surgeries and procedures that were previously rescheduled out of an abundance of caution amid the COVID-19 pandemic.** The decision to reschedule procedures when clinically appropriate was made in accordance with federal and state guidance, and aimed to help preserve critical resources in the event of a surge of COVID-19 patients in the community. Today, current projections indicate a lower than expected volume of COVID-19 in the region, which means less strain on healthcare resources.

“Resuming these important services is an essential component of meeting our community’s health needs,” said Dr. Dean French, Chief Executive Officer of Community Medical Center. “As this work gradually gets underway in our hospital again, we remain committed to conserving critical supplies, being vigilant in our fight against COVID-19, and ensuring that our facility is a safe place for all patients, providers and employees.”

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Medical Center has continued to carefully follow guidance from federal, state and local officials, monitor the prevalence of the virus in the community, and evaluate supplies and resources – including personal protective equipment like masks, gowns, gloves and goggles.

The decisions about which procedures can safely move forward will be made only after assessing a comprehensive pre-operative checklist and evaluating potential risks. The hospital will initially focus on scheduling patients with more time-sensitive health needs, and those decisions will be made in partnership with the attending medical provider. Patients who are scheduled and approved for procedures must meet specific requirements, including passing standard COVID-19 screenings. Surgical patients also will be asked to practice quarantine behaviors for seven days prior to their procedure to minimize potential exposure; check their temperature twice a day during this 7-day period and report temperatures over 100°F to their provider; and undergo testing for COVID-19.

Patients awaiting information about their previously postponed procedure can expect to hear from their provider or provider’s office to discuss rescheduling at the appropriate time.

Community Medical Center will continue to screen and mask everyone who enters the facility and maintain a zero-visitor protocol for the foreseeable future. These important measures have had a positive impact on ensuring a safe environment, and they also are aligned with the federal government's guidelines. Additionally, the facility has implemented new processes and procedures to further protect the health of patients, providers and employees. Visit communitymed.org to learn more.

As a reminder, if you are having a medical emergency, you should call 911 or go directly to the Emergency Room. If possible, tell the dispatch agent if your emergency involves symptoms possibly related to COVID-19.

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About Community Medical Center

Community Medical Center is a leading healthcare organization in Missoula, Montana, dedicated to enhancing the health of Montanans with a complete range of medical services and patient-centered care. As a 151-bed hospital, CMC offers medical, surgical, obstetrics, newborn services including a 34-bed Level IIIB neonatal intensive care, perinatology, pediatrics, pediatric and adult intensive care, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, general surgery, oncology, general and interventional cardiology, electrophysiology and orthopedic services. In addition, CMC's specialized facility services include an advanced wound care center, emergency department, regional walk-in clinics and physician practices. CMC is a joint venture with LifePoint Health and Billings Clinic. communitymed.org