

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, April 9, 2021

Niagara Health ramping down, postponing some surgeries starting April 12

Niagara Health is ramping down and postponing some surgical cases beginning on Monday, April 12, amid extreme pressure on critical care capacity across the province. This comes in response to direction from Ontario Health.

“These are extremely challenging times for everyone, and we are deeply disappointed that the current situation requires hospitals to take these emergency measures to protect capacity for life-saving critical care,” says Niagara Health President and Interim CEO Lynn Guerriero. “We understand the impact the postponement of surgeries will have on our patients, their families and caregivers, and we’re very sorry for this unfortunate situation.”

All patients scheduled for a surgical procedure will be called directly by their care provider starting today, to confirm whether they are proceeding or having their procedure deferred. Decisions regarding urgency of each case and whether the procedure will be deferred will be made by each patient’s clinical team and will be based on individual circumstances. Patients are encouraged not to call the hospital or their surgeon. We will reschedule surgeries as soon as we are able to do so.

“Making the decision to postpone a surgery is taken very seriously, and we want to assure patients that their health and wellbeing is our top priority,” says Dr. Johan Viljoen, Niagara Health Chief of Staff. “Our clinical team will assess each individual patient’s case. If the urgency of a patient’s situation changes, decisions to reschedule will be re-evaluated. We will continuously monitor the situation with a view to resuming all surgical care as soon as it is safe to do so.”

There are no other changes to our current services at this time.

Right now, we have capacity in our Intensive Care Units and have a plan to take a stepped approach to increase critical care capacity, as needed. To ensure patients across the province receive the life-saving care they need, hospitals in harder-hit areas of Ontario are transferring patients to hospitals with critical care capacity, which includes Niagara Health.

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