

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

August 18, 2020

Organizations provide guidance for essential operations during the pandemic

The recent resurgence of COVID-19 has many states near or at bed and intensive care unit capacity. Health care facilities' abilities to meet the needs of surgical patients may be stressed by new influxes of admitted COVID-19 patients. To ensure health care organizations, physicians and nurses remain prepared to meet these demands to care for patients who undergo recommended essential operations, a roadmap for maintaining essential surgery during the COVID-19 pandemic has been developed by the American College of Surgeons, American Society of Anesthesiologists, Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses and the American Hospital Association. The roadmap provides a list of principles and considerations to guide physicians, nurses, and hospitals and health systems as they provide essential care to their patients and communities. According to this roadmap, facilities should:

- Adopt policies addressing care issues specific to COVID-19 and the postponement of surgical scheduling.
- Cooperate to address capacity and new patient needs to ensure facilities have appropriate numbers of intensive care unit and medical/surgical beds, personal protective equipment, testing reagents and supplies, ventilators and trained staff to treat nonelective patients without resorting to a crisis standard of care. Daily forecasting of COVID-19 demand on resources will be the baseline for determining the ability to add non-COVID-19 cases.
- Establish a case-prioritization policy committee consisting of surgery, anesthesia and nursing leadership to develop a case-prioritization strategy appropriate to the immediate patient needs.
- Implement a face-covering and social-distancing policy for staff, patients and patient visitors in nonrestricted areas in the facility that meets local and national recommendations for community isolation practices.
- Not provide nonemergent essential surgical services unless they have adequate personal protective equipment and medical surgical supplies appropriate to the number and type of procedures to be performed.
- Reevaluate policies and procedures frequently, based on COVID-19-related data, resources, testing and other clinical information.
- Use available testing to protect staff and patients, and they should begin a policy to address requirements and frequency for patient and staff testing according to CDC guidelines.
- Work with medical professional societies and government agencies to ensure adequate supplies of vital equipment and medicines.

CEO update call

The next CEO update call is scheduled from **1-2 pm Wednesday, Aug. 26**. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Educational opportunities

- **Noon-1 pm Thursday, Aug. 20, Leadership and Resiliency: Navigating Through and Beyond COVID-19 – Win When: The 21st Century Challenges of Health Equity** – From broken community partnerships to diminished funding, how do we overcome the 21st century challenges of health equity? This presentation motivates clinicians, researchers and health care leaders to explore the role, recognition and remediation of inequity in medicine. The presentation also teaches health care providers and biomedical researchers how to clinically confront the deadly "isms" that prevent quality care and public wellness. This session, and the entire series, is complimentary. Register [HERE](#).

- **2-3 pm Tuesday, Sept. 1, Implementing a Successful Rural Telemedicine Program** – This webinar will examine the value and benefit of inpatient telemedicine programs, with an emphasis on its use in rural hospitals. The Access Physicians team will discuss specific subspecialties that can be provided through telemedicine to help hospitals retain patients, improve clinical outcomes and be financially successful. The presentation also will provide a road map to implementing those programs. Register [HERE](#).
- **2-3 pm Thursday, Sept. 17, Gratitude: The Path to Resilience, Well-being and Joy** – Gratitude isn't just a practice that makes one feel good. It can boost resilience, improve sleep, be a buffer against anxiety and depression, and reduce burnout in health care professionals. This webinar will explore meditation, journaling and expressive art practices designed to cultivate gratitude and boost resilience. Attendees also will learn how gratitude can enhance on-the-job effectiveness. Register [HERE](#).
- **8:30 am-12:30 pm Friday, Sept. 18, Iowa Society for Healthcare Engineering Virtual Conference** – The society's fall conference provides education to promote quality patient care, optimize facilities for the COVID-19 environment and prepare for health care's future through improved engineering practices. Register [HERE](#).

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