

## IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF NON-ESSENTIAL SURGERIES AND PROCEDURES THROUGHOUT OHIO

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As Ohio braces for the surge of COVID-19 patients, the state and nation face a dire shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE). **It is expected that the amount of PPE that Ohio will need to deal with this crisis is equal to the amount of PPE available nationally.** Accordingly, very difficult decisions are being made in order to preserve PPE.

The U.S. Surgeon General, American College of Surgeons, and numerous other public health experts have recommended the cancellation of all elective surgeries and procedures that utilize PPE. **On Tuesday, March, 17 Ohio Governor Mike DeWine intends to declare that non-essential surgeries and procedures that utilize PPE should not be conducted, effective at the close of business on Wednesday, March 18.** In anticipation of that order, OHA convened a statewide group of health system surgery experts to develop the following principles for defining what surgeries and procedures should and should not be performed in order to comply with the Governor's order. These guidelines preserve key elements of the physician-patient relationship and ensure Ohioans maintain access to necessary services during this crisis.

**Why Cancel Non-Essential Surgeries and Procedures:** The Governor's order is intended to:

- 1) Protect patients and providers;
- 2) Preserve critically short supplies of PPE; and
- 3) Preserve inpatient bed capacity and other equipment for critically ill patients.

**The following criteria shall be used throughout Ohio by physicians and patients for determining what surgeries and procedures are non-essential and should be cancelled, consistent with the Governor's order. It is vital to have a consistent statewide approach to this issue.**

**Criteria for Cancellation of Non-Essential Surgeries and Procedures that utilize PPE:** If none of the following criteria are met, the surgery or procedure will be cancelled:

- Threat to the patient's life if surgery or procedure is not performed;
- Threat of permanent dysfunction of an extremity or organ system;
- Risk of metastasis or progression of staging;
- Risk of rapidly worsening to severe symptoms (time sensitivity)

**Eliminate Non-Essential Individuals from Surgery/Procedure Rooms and Patient Care Areas:** In order to preserve PPE, only individuals who are essential to conducting the surgery or procedure shall be in the surgery or procedure suite or other patient care areas where PPE is required.

**Governance:** Each hospital and outpatient surgery or procedure provider shall establish an internal governance structure to ensure the principles outlined above are followed.