

Date: March 15, 2020

From: Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N)

Subj: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Elective Procedures.

To: Network Directors (10N1-23)

1. In Veterans Health Administration, the safety of our Veterans and employees is our highest priority. Effective immediately, VHA facilities will plan to cease non-urgent elective procedures no later than Wednesday, March 18, 2020. This action will reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and ICU use and will free up resources to address the increasing number of Veterans under evaluation and diagnosed with COVID-19.

2. Facility leadership will determine how this is implemented, including appropriate communication with impacted Veterans. It is important that urgent and emergent cases continue during this period.

3. National Program offices may offer guidance on prioritizing procedures in high risk populations. Additional information can be obtained from National Program office directors:

- Mark Wilson, National Director of Surgery at Mark.Wilson5@va.gov
- W.C. Yarbrough, National Director Pulmonary/Critical Care/Sleep Medicine at WC.Yarbrough@va.gov
- Patricia E. Arola, Asst. Under Secretary for Health for Dentistry at Patricia.Arola@va.gov
- Jason Dornitz, National Director of Gastroenterology at Jason.Dornitz@va.gov

Renee Oshinski