

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 4, 2020

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### **Oneida Health Hospital to Resume Elective Procedures**

**Oneida, NY** – Oneida Health announced today that it will resume performing outpatient elective procedures at its hospital after validating that they have met the criteria released by the Department of Health (DOH) on Wednesday.

The New York State DOH directive requires an eligible hospital to have an available inpatient and Intensive Care Unit capacity over 30 percent and fewer than ten hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients over a 10-day look back period to resume non-essential outpatient elective surgeries and non-urgent procedures.

“While some hospitals in New York State have been heavily impacted by COVID-19 patients, we have not,” said Gene Morreale, CEO and President at Oneida Health. “When we have admitted a COVID-19 patient in our facility, we have isolated them to designated areas with dedicated staff. This has worked extremely well and as a result, all patients, both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19, have received exceptional care.”

In addition to capacity requirements, hospitals are also required to have an adequate supply of PPE, staffing, COVID-19 testing, and also establish a multi-disciplinary committee to ensure appropriate prioritization of elective procedures.

“We understand that there is a lot of uncertainty at this time due to the pandemic,” said Mr. Morreale. “Our care team has remained committed to doing everything it takes to provide a safe environment for all patients. We have implemented all guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the DOH to ensure that staff, providers, and patients are cared for in the safest environment possible. Rest assured, every precaution that can be taken, has been.”

All patients who are scheduled to have an outpatient procedure will be required to have a pre-screening test for COVID-19 three days prior to their procedure at the hospital’s drive-thru testing center. Patients will also complete a screening assessment on the day of their appointment. To limit exposure, Oneida Health is providing direct pathways to private rooms for surgical patients, enforcing strict social distancing, proper PPE, and enhanced cleaning protocol to remain proactive.



“We have always had some of the lowest nosocomial infection rates in New York State,” said Morreale. “This is a testament to our team’s dedication prior to COVID-19 to strict infection control strategies that provide safe care to our patients. These practices will only continue with an emphasis on new guidelines provided by state and federal officials.”

In addition to following the highest suggested disinfectant currently recommended by the CDC, including the use of COVID-19 disinfecting wipes and sprays, Oneida Health also incorporates new disinfecting technologies. “Our cleaning efforts are further enhanced by the use of Tru-D, a state of the art ultraviolet light system which reflects throughout the room killing any bacteria or virus that may have survived the terminal cleaning,” said Morreale. “It’s impressive technology that has proven effective.”

Mr. Morreale also emphasized the importance of patients taking an active role in keeping them self safe. “More so than ever, patients need to be part of their own safety. We are communicating to our patients how they can take an active role in their care by following some simple guidelines.” These guidelines include staying at home, practicing social distancing 14 days prior to their procedure, washing their hands frequently, limiting contact to surfaces, and wearing a face mask where appropriate.

With the resuming of elective procedures, Oneida Health Hospital will also be performing non-urgent endoscopy procedures in their hospital along with a range of surgical procedures in their ambulatory care center.

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### **About Oneida Health**

Oneida Health serves an area comprised of approximately 29 communities in Madison and western Oneida counties with a population of approximately 100,000. Operated by Oneida Health Systems, Inc, a New York State not-for-profit corporation, the organization includes a 101-bed acute care hospital, emergency department, state of the art surgery center, 160-bed extended-care and short-term rehab facility, primary care offices, internal medicine, comprehensive lab services, home medical equipment, comprehensive imaging services, outpatient therapy, and care specialties in: oncology, neurology, podiatry, vascular, sleep, OB/GYN, orthopedics, wound care, GI, and ENT. To learn more about Oneida Health, visit [www.oneidahealth.org](http://www.oneidahealth.org).