

SSM Health, UW Health, Unity Point Health: Hospitals taking steps to manage increased hospitalizations from COVID-19

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MADISON, Wis. – As we see a record number of COVID-19 hospitalizations locally and across Wisconsin, UnityPoint Health – Meriter, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital and UW Health are taking action to handle the increase without major disruptions to non-COVID-19 patient needs.

All three health systems are assessing schedules for non-emergency and non-urgent procedures and surgeries. In limited cases, these services may be postponed. Impacted services, schedules and operational details may vary by location and health system. Care teams will reach out directly to affected patients whose procedures will be rescheduled.

Urgent procedures like c-sections, appendectomies, bone fracture repair and other emergency surgeries will continue at all of our hospitals. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the Emergency Department. All hospitals have a number of precautions in place to keep our patients and staff safe.

This step allows more clinical staff, hospital beds and other resources to be available for a growing number of COVID-19 patients and other urgent medical needs. While we recognize this is difficult for our patients who experience a schedule change, we must prioritize the urgent health needs of our local community and surrounding region.

This is a rapidly evolving situation, and we will reassess schedules on an ongoing

basis.

Over the course of the last six months, all three hospitals have prepared for the possibility of a surge in COVID-19 cases and have protocols in place that ensure any changes should be limited in scope. While we're confident in our ability to care for an increasing number of patients, **we continue to ask our community to support us by wearing a mask, physically distancing and washing their hands.**

Representatives from all three hospitals are available for interviews. Please use the contact information listed above to schedule.