



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

November 10, 2020

Dear Colleague:

Maryland is currently experiencing an alarming increase in COVID-19 activity. More than 1,000 new PCR-confirmed cases have been reported to MDH each day over the last three days. Case rates and COVID test percent positivity are increasing as well, as are COVID-19 hospital and ICU admissions, outbreaks in skilled nursing facilities and COVID-19 deaths. Increases in activity are occurring throughout the state.

In response, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is providing you the following cautionary guidance regarding elective hospital admissions:

**Elective admissions that are likely to require prolonged artificial ventilation, ICU admission or may have a high probability of requiring post hospital care in a skilled nursing facility should be avoided.**

MDH recognizes that Maryland hospitals vary in capacity, staffing support and the types and needs of patients served, and therefore, currently, the decision about when to invoke a strict moratorium on elective admissions is being made by the leadership at each hospital; however, MDH urges all Maryland clinicians to monitor the local and state situation and follow this guidance to the extent possible. It is our hope and intention that taking early and measured precautions now will delay or obviate the need for more stringent and universal interventions later.

In addition to these measures MDH would like to remind clinicians to adhere to best infection control practices for safe workflows in hospitals and ambulatory facilities, use telehealth technology to the extent practical for caring for all patients, especially those who are high risk, continue to test patients within the guidelines for Covid-19 and be well prepared for your upcoming roles in Covid-19 immunization.

Thank you for your continued extraordinary efforts caring for patients in our community.

Sincerely,

Jinlene Chan, MD, MPH, FAAP  
Acting Deputy Director  
Public Health Services

Howard Haft, MD, MMM, CPE, FACPE  
Executive Director  
Maryland Primary Care Model