Governor Halts Elective Surgeries

Governor Ducey yesterday announced a new series of Executive Orders late Thursday to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, including Executive Order 2020-10. Part of this executive order requires, effective Saturday, March 21 at 8 a.m., all licensed healthcare facilities and providers halt all “non-essential or elective surgeries, including elective dental surgeries, that utilize personal protective equipment or ventilators.” The executive order defines non-essential surgeries as “a surgery that can be delayed without undue risk to the current or future health of the patient.” In determining which procedures are non-essential, medical professionals shall consider the health and age of the patient and the urgency of the surgery. A surgery shall not be deemed non-essential if delaying it would “threaten the patient’s life, threaten permanent dysfunction or impairment of any body part, risk metastasis or progression of staging, or require the patient to remain hospitalized.”

Earlier in the week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services provided a tiered framework that hospitals and health systems can use to evaluate whether to provide non-essential procedures during community spread of COVID-19. In seeking clarification on the whether the EO was to cover all non-essential procedures, or just surgeries, the governor’s office stated their intent is to just limit non-essential surgeries for now.

Additional Executive Orders announced yesterday require the closure of all bars, movie theaters and gyms in counties with confirmed COVID-19 cases. Restaurants may provide dine-out options only. The National Guard is being activated to assist grocery stores and food banks, and expiration dates on driver licenses are being delayed to ensure at-risk populations do not need to visit the Motor Vehicle Department.

Additional Resources Arrive in Arizona

An allotment from the Strategic National Stockpile has arrived in Arizona. However, the amount of PPE and supplies does not align with the amount Arizona requested. The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) is working with local public health departments to process the shipment. Each local health agency will deliver the resources to healthcare facilities and first responders that they determine has the most critical need in their jurisdiction.
AzHHA and AzCHER hospital member alert – COVID-19

ADHS has indicated they are developing a process that healthcare facilities will need to use when requesting additional supplies moving forward. AzHHA and AzCHER will send out more information on the process when it is available.

COVID-19 Updates
Ensure your hospital response team is on AzHHA’s COVID-19 member advisory distribution list. Email Communications@AzHHA.org with your team’s email addresses and ask us to add you to the list to receive future member advisories and COVID-19 updates.