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Headwaters to gradually restart elective surgeries next week

Headwaters' clinical team has assessed its internal readiness and has developed a safe and gradual plan to resume elective surgeries and procedures in the operating room and ambulatory care department, starting May 31st.

As you know, hospitals in Ontario were directed to ramp down non-emergency procedures on April 20th at the height of Wave 3, to preserve hospital bed capacity and allow staff to be redeployed to areas of greatest need.

As new COVID cases, hospitalizations and ICU admissions continue to decrease, Ontario Health withdrew Directive #2 on May 18th giving hospitals the green light to gradually and cautiously begin ramping-up elective surgeries and procedures.

The initial focus will be on the resumption of outpatient procedures and day surgeries that do not require a hospital stay. This will allow us to continue to respond to an increase in COVID patients, as needed.

Hospitals must also continue to ensure inpatient hospital capacity and health human resources are available to support the province's critical care needs and remain ready to accept patient transfers as required. Headwaters has received 35 COVID-19 recovering patient transfers to date.

Some hospitals continue to be hard-hit by COVID, and to ensure people in their communities are able to access surgeries and procedures, other hospitals may be called on to provide support.

We recognize that patients are anxious to have their surgeries and procedures re-scheduled. Specialist's offices have started the process of identifying and calling patients to reschedule their procedures, using an ethical framework to help prioritize patient care. Our Ambulatory Care programs will also begin gradually rescheduling services.

We appreciate your patience and understanding with the changes to our programs and services during the COVID-19 pandemic. We see this as a very hopeful signal for our communities that all our collective actions, including widespread vaccinations, are helping us turn the corner of the COVID-19 pandemic.