
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
May 12, 2020

Surgery pre-admission changes to keep patients safe

Northern Health is resuming elective surgeries that were postponed due to COVID-19, and we are committed to helping keep patients, medical staff and support staff safe.

NH is implementing plans for telephone pre-admission screening of surgical patients, where available. This new model of care will reduce the need for patients to come to the hospital for in-person visits before their surgeries, and will include telephone assessments, and consultations.

Northern Health is resuming elective surgeries which were postponed to ensure capacity in our hospitals to support patients with COVID-19. While the pandemic continues to evolve, we are actively working to safely resume elective surgeries while continuing to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Starting today, Northern Health will begin to contact patients to book procedures and/or to confirm if they are willing and able to move forward with surgery. We recognize that some individuals may wish to continue to postpone their surgery at this time.

Patients who require urgent, emergent and oncology-related surgeries will continue to be prioritized.

To minimize transmission of COVID-19 for patients, staff and medical staff, a number of measures will be implemented as part of the surgical process:

- When possible, patients will be assessed through a telephone call prior to surgery
- Consistent screening tools and risk assessment guidelines will be used
- Patients will be assessed 24-72 hours prior to surgery and arrival the day of surgery
- Surgeries will be scheduled with time to accommodate additional cleaning and infection control measures.

Patients will be rescheduled based on priority determined by their surgeon.

To provide surgeries to patients as quickly as possible, Northern Health will be back to full surgical capacity as soon as we can and, where possible, will expand surgical capacity over the coming months. This plan is dependent on several factors such as adequate supply of personal protective equipment, full commitment of all partners, and monitoring of any possible fall/winter resurgence of COVID-19.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit [Northern Health's Coronavirus information \(COVID-19\) web page](#).

Media Contact: NH media line – 1-877-961-7724