

Auburn Community Hospital Approved by NYS Department of Health to Resume Elective Surgeries

For Immediate Release – May 6, 2020- The New York State Department of Health has approved Auburn Community Hospital’s (ACH) plan to resume elective surgeries. Elective Surgeries will begin at ACH the week of May 11, 2020.

State requirements mandate fewer than 10 new hospitalizations of coronavirus patients in the county over a period of 10 days before a hospital may begin conducting elective procedures.

“Over the course of the last 60 days, the hospital has only admitted 5 positive cases of Covid-19. ACH formed a Surgical Leadership Team weeks ago to prepare for the reopening of elective surgeries. The team’s goal was to develop and implement the tightest health and safety standards that will meet or exceed the needs of our elective surgery patients. Safety is our first priority for our patients and our staff,” stated Dr. John Riccio, Chief Medical Officer, Auburn Community Hospital.

“We are ready and able to resume elective surgery with an adequate supply of PPE, all infection control measures will be followed, and safety monitoring is already in place to make sure our patients and staff are safe. Our team in surgical services has been working hard over the past few weeks to prepare for the reopening of outpatient elective surgeries and we plan on resuming surgeries the week of May 11, 2020,” according to Scott Berlucchi, President & CEO.

The plans incorporates recommendations from the following healthcare organizations:

- New York State Department of Health
- American College of Surgeons
- American Society of Anesthesiologists
- Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
- American Hospital Association

To ensure patients can have elective surgeries as soon as safely possible, the following process developed by the NYS Department of Health will guide patients

and staff on how Elective Surgery and other health care will be prioritized and scheduled:

1. *General hospitals should establish a prioritization policy committee consisting of surgery, anesthesia and nursing leadership to develop a prioritization strategy appropriate to the immediate patient needs.*
2. *Hospitals must test all patients receiving outpatient elective surgeries and non-urgent procedures for COVID-19 and patients must test negative for COVID-19 using a molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA prior to any such surgery or procedure. The test must be administered no more than 3 days prior to the surgery or procedure. Hospitals should counsel patients to maintain social distancing as described in the directive for the 14 days before the surgery or procedure.*
3. *General hospitals must have adequate PPE and medical surgical supplies appropriate to the number and type of procedures to be performed, including at all stages (pre-operative and post-discharge) of care associated with the procedure and the needs of the patient and health care personnel. Adequate PPE means that a hospital has at least a seven (7) day supply of PPE on hand, and the hospital's supply chain can maintain that level without resorting to contingency or crisis capacity strategies based on the Center for Disease Control's Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment, or requiring distribution of PPE from government emergency stockpiles.*
4. *Eligible hospitals resuming elective outpatient surgeries and non-urgent procedures must ensure sufficient staffing appropriate to the surgery or procedure, and must take into consideration the time needed to repatriate staff to ambulatory and non-urgent care settings.*

Auburn Community Hospital Auburn Community Hospital (ACH) is a not-for-profit, 99-bed acute care facility with a mission to provide compassionate quality care to our community. ACH is the sole provider of acute and general hospital services in Cayuga County and the surrounding areas located in the Finger Lakes region of Central New York including one of the highest rated 80-bed Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center in the state.