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Framework for Restarting Non-Emergent and Elective Procedures in Medical and Dental Offices

On April 14th Governor Brown announced a public health framework for restarting public life and business in Oregon. This plan outlines the necessary tasks, discrete steps and guidelines for step-by-step reopening. Among those important tasks is a look at how and when to resume non-emergent and elective procedures requiring personal protective equipment (PPE) that were cancelled as a result of Governor Brown's Executive Order No. 20-10¹.

The following is a framework for restarting non-emergent and elective procedures in medical and dental offices that require PPE, including priorities, required steps and specific criteria².

Priorities

The following priorities must inform all actions towards resuming non-emergent and elective office-based procedures requiring PPE:

- Minimize the risk of SARS-COV-2 transmission to patients, healthcare workers and others;
- Avoid further delays in healthcare for Oregonians;
- Maintain adequate hospital capacity in case of an increase in COVID-19 cases;
- Minimize health emergencies presenting at emergency departments;
- Reduce financial impacts to Oregon's health system; and
- Support the healthcare workforce in safely resuming activities.

¹ In order to preserve PPE and limit all non-essential visitation to hospitals and other health care facilities, Governor Brown issued [Executive Order No. 20-10](#) on March 19, 2020 to cancel all elective and non-urgent health care procedures that require personal protective equipment (PPE) effective March 23, 2020.

² A separate framework for restarting elective and non-emergent veterinary procedures will be published by the Oregon Health Authority.

Approach and Criteria for Medical and Dental Offices

To address each of these priorities, the following steps and specific criteria must be met in order to resume and maintain non-emergency and elective procedures in office settings (i.e., medical and dental offices) requiring PPE:

1. Prior to resuming non-emergency and elective procedures in medical or dental offices, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The office must have adequate PPE supplies on hand³.
 - i. The medical or dental office can sustain recommended PPE use for its workforce for two weeks without the need for emergency PPE-conserving measures.
 - ii. If a facility proposes to extend the use of or reuse PPE, it must follow CDC guidance.
 - b. Medical or dental office is following strict infection control policies as recommended by CDC.
2. Once non-emergency and elective procedures resume, start slowly and reassess every two weeks.
 - a. Decrease caseload volume to maximize social distancing.
 - i. Medical and dental offices should implement social distancing measures within waiting rooms and other areas of the office.
 - ii. Medical and dental offices should use physical barriers within patient care areas when possible.
 - b. In order to maintain or expand this volume, office must continue to meet all items in 1 (a-b).
 - c. Medical or dental office must maintain a plan to reduce or stop non-emergency and elective procedures should a surge/resurgence of COVID-19 cases occur in their region.
 - d. Prioritize procedures based on whether their continued delay will have an adverse health outcome.
 - i. Non-emergent and elective procedures should be prioritized based on indication and urgency⁴.
 - e. Strongly consider the balance of risks vs. benefits for patients in higher-risk groups such as those over age 60 and those with compromised immune systems or lung and heart function.
 - f. Medical and dental offices should utilize enhanced risk screening of patients prior to delivering care.

³ The state will explore options for resupply of PPE to those facilities that were asked to give up their surplus when the Governor's Executive Order was established.

⁴ Urgent and emergent care should continue in accordance with OHA and CMS guidance.

- i. Pre-screen patients via tele-medicine or tele-dentistry when applicable.
- ii. Screen all patients for COVID-19 risk factors and symptoms, including temperature checks.
 1. Patients with COVID-19 symptoms should not undergo non-emergent or elective procedures.
 2. When adequate testing capability is established, consider screening patients by laboratory testing before proceeding with a non-emergent or elective procedure.

The Governor's Office in consultation with the Oregon Health Authority will determine the necessary tools to monitor that these criteria are being met and when different or additional criteria should be considered.