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St. Joseph Campus Restarts Select Services and Surgeries

Emergency Department open for ambulances and walk-in patients

For the past four and a half months, Sisters Hospital, St. Joseph Campus, has operated as a COVID-only treatment facility. In late March, with COVID-19 surging across the region, and Governor Cuomo calling for outside-the-box thinking, Catholic Health made the bold decision to close the Cheektowaga hospital and make the necessary safety and equipment modifications to reposition the facility as its main inpatient center for the care and treatment of COVID patients.

The facility was recognized locally, statewide, and nationally for its unique purpose and stringent focus on staff and patient safety, with specially designed safety zones and heightened infection control protocols. At the height of the pandemic, nearly 100 patients were cared for at the facility. This past week, St. Joseph Campus discharged its 500th COVID patient.

With the total number of COVID patients declining to single digits in recent weeks, and the trend expected to continue in Western New York, Catholic Health began reintroducing emergency, acute care and outpatient services previously offered at the Campus, on August 2. Services will be slowly phased-in over the next several weeks.

Phase One services will include reopening the:

- Emergency Department
- Metabolic Center, including cardiac rehab, physical therapy, occupational therapy
- Endoscopy/GI Unit
- Sleep Care
- Select outpatient/ancillary services including Cardiology (EKG, Echo), Diagnostic Radiology (X-Ray, CT, Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine)
- Select outpatient surgical procedures including Retina, Podiatry, ENT, Plastics

“With the sharp decline in the number of COVID patients that require hospitalization, we feel that we can safely re-open much needed services that are beneficial to the health and wellness of our community,” said Marty Boryszak, Catholic Health Senior Vice President of Acute Care Services and Sisters Hospital President. “Our

patients' health and safety always come first and our organization is taking every step possible to maintain the highest infection control standards as we resume necessary services.”

All areas of the hospital have undergone a thorough deep cleaning and disinfection process by a professional cleaning company – the same process that has been used at other Catholic Health hospitals and facilities to ensure long-term environmental and surface cleaning and disinfecting. Hospital officials have also worked closely with the Department of Health in developing its disinfection protocols and reopening plan.

As is standard practice in all hospitals, everyone entering St. Joseph Campus, including associates, patients, and visitors must undergo a health screening and temperature check. Everyone in the facility is required to wear a face mask. Patients will then be escorted to the specific area of the hospital for their service or procedure. The escort will press all elevator buttons and open any doors necessary.

With the uncertainty that still exists around COVID-19, St. Joseph Campus will maintain a closed COVID treatment unit, separate from the remaining hospital, with restricted access, separate transport routes and a dedicated staff. While no hospital can guarantee a completely COVID-free environment, and other hospitals in WNY currently care for COVID patients, the staff at St. Joseph Campus have the training and experience to keep all patients as safe as possible.

Inpatients at St. Joseph Campus, excluding those being treated for COVID-19, will be allowed one visitor at a time during limited visiting hours, per Department of Health regulations and Catholic Health restrictions. For more information, visit www.chsbuffalo.org/visitors.

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