



March 17, 2020

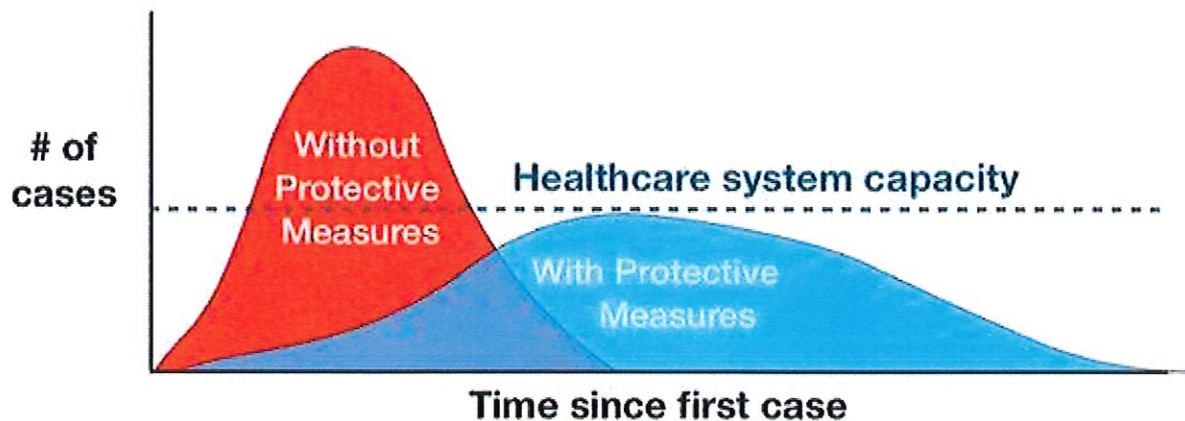
Dear Colleagues,

As you know, we are diligently working to ensure that Sheridan Memorial Hospital is fully resourced to take care of the on-going and emergent healthcare needs of our community. We are also continuously planning to care for the acutely ill patients exposed to the COVID-19 virus. I want to share with you some of the planning and actions that we have taken to effectively care for our community.

An important variable in our planning and response is the rate of spread in the community. Based on mathematical modeling of the COVID-19 spread, Public Health officials believe, if people are able to effectively isolate through self-imposed social distancing, avoiding social gatherings and limiting their movement, there may be a better chance that there will not be a spike in the number of cases that need acute medical attention.

If however, we are not effective in these social distancing efforts, we may see a higher rate of cases in a shorter period of time, which can have a tremendously adverse impact on the usage rate of our personal protective equipment (PPE) and the health of our clinical staff and supportive care teams.

I found this graphic to be very helpful related to the impact that social distancing can have on our healthcare system resources and healthcare system capacity, represented by the dotted line in the graph below. The red area is representative of the spike in cases in a short period of time, whereas, the blue area represents a more equal distribution of cases over a longer period of time through self-imposed isolation in our community.



*Adapted from CDC / The Economist*

Employing our Incident Command structure with these factors in mind, we have been able to respond in a variety of ways. I want to share with you some of the steps we have taken relative to: rate of community spread, preserving the health of our clinical and supportive care teams and preserving personal protective equipment (PPE).

**What the Hospital is doing to decrease the rate of spread:**

- We are limiting public access to the hospital campus and inside the buildings themselves.



- We have suspended public access to the hospital cafeteria and Sidewalk Café for the foreseeable future.
- We are decreasing entry points into Hospital buildings.
- We are setting up screening sites at all entry points.
- We are calling ahead to all patients who have a scheduled visit at all hospital buildings to screen for COVID-19 symptoms.
- We have suspended elective surgical cases at Sheridan Memorial Hospital for the foreseeable future. All surgical cases will be evaluated by the attending surgeon in consultation with their patients.
- We are in daily contact with Sheridan County Incident Command, assisting them with community planning and communications.

**What the Hospital is doing to preserve the health of our clinical and supportive care teams:**

- We are ensuring our nursing resources are deployed appropriately throughout the hospital to relieve undue burden on departments with heavy demand.
- We are continuously monitoring any staff sick calls to determine symptoms and safe return to work date.
- In the patient, family and public screening process, we are determining when wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is necessary.
- We have adjusted our sick leave policy to allow staff to immediately access their extended illness bank (EIB) to encourage them to stay home when sick.
- We are working with all hospital personnel to evaluate their duties and opportunities for them to work from home or a remote location away from the main hospital buildings.
- Our Incident Command team is meeting twice daily and available 24 hours a day to respond to our hospital and community needs.

**What the Hospital is doing to preserve Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- We have suspended non-emergent surgical procedures to curtail the usage rate of PPE.
- We are conducting daily inventories of PPE supplies.
- We are ordering our entire allocation of PPE and exploring all vendors possible to ensure maximum inventory.
- We are reviewing clinical practices around PPE usage for isolation patients in order to safely preserve PPE for potential COVID-19 patients.
- We are accessing emergency preparedness reserves as needed.

Please remember that employees, and our patients, who are concerned about COVID-19 symptoms are being encouraged to call a dedicated hotline at (307) 672-1004 to be screened. I also want to emphasize that the Sheridan Memorial Hospital website has outstanding sources of information for the COVID-19 outbreak, offering the latest updates.

I am deeply thankful for the effort and continued diligence of our healthcare system team as we face these challenges together. We have a tremendous role to play in this community and our neighbors, friends and families are depending on our expertise, professionalism and humanity. Let's do our best work for all of them.

Yours in Health & Service,

Mike McCafferty, Chief Executive Officer  
Sheridan Memorial Hospital