

Editorial Submission
Monadnock Community Hospital
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Message from Cyndee McGuire, CEO, and Mike Shea, Chair, MCH Board of Trustees

MCH Remains Vigilant

The Monadnock Region has not yet seen the surge of COVID-19 patients as originally projected by the CDC (Center for Disease Control). This is good news for all of us. Our community's commitment to stopping the spread of the virus has saved lives and has prevented a situation that could have potentially overwhelmed Monadnock Community Hospital. We have had many weeks to prepare and make adjustments to our normal operations. Some of the adjustments include: setting up new protocols for caring for COVID-19 patients, finding new sources of supplies and personal protective equipment for our medical staff and employees, expanding our bed capacity from 25 to 40, and implementing tele-health for continued routine care for our many outpatients and patients who traditionally visit our physician offices. MCH feels well prepared for what we now know may be a long haul of dealing with this deadly virus. Until we have a vaccine or wide spread systematic testing of the population, many of our precautions will have to remain in place. We are following NH Department of Public Health guidelines for testing and have an adequate number of tests to accomplish this. At this time, we do not have the ability to do widespread testing. Such a system will come at the guidance of the CDC and the NH Department of Health and Human Services.

We are closely following prediction models used around the county to plan for both the short term and the long term. We, like many hospitals are beginning to plan to re-introduce elective appointments and procedures in a safe manner, while still protecting the health our community. The routine delivery of healthcare will continue, often using technology in new ways to limit exposure of our patients and healthcare workers. All agree that this restoration of services must be done slowly and carefully. The process will be less like turning on a light switch and more like a sunrise.

This pandemic has put enormous strain on almost every industry in the world. The hospital's normal revenue stream has dropped significantly which is creating challenges. The hospital has been actively applying for all available funding including loans and grants. To date, MCH has been successful in obtaining advanced payments from Medicare to help with cash flow and has applied for Payroll Tax Deferment. The hospital has also received some payment from the

Federal CARES Act funds and is applying for FEMA reimbursement. MCH remains focused on long term sustainability.

We cannot overstate our gratitude for the support we have received on many fronts. Local manufacturers and individuals have donated significant amounts of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and our congressional representatives and senators have advocated in support of our hospital obtaining much needed supplies. This support means so much for the safety of our front line caregivers and for that we are grateful. Community members have reached out with gifts of food and personal items for our staff. Many contributors have donated to our COVID-19 Fund. Thanks to a very high level of community support on every level, we are well-prepared to care for our patients. We will get through this together!