

**Local hospitals and healthcare providers rescheduling non-essential surgeries and procedures to mitigate risk of further COVID-19 community spread**

**March 19, 2020**--Hospital and healthcare leaders across Northwest Georgia are working collaboratively to respond to the increasing presence of COVID-19 in Northwest Georgia. Following the guidelines from both the U.S. Surgeon General and the American College of Surgeons, effective immediately, AdventHealth, Cartersville Medical Center, Floyd Health System, Harbin Clinic and Redmond Regional Medical Center are beginning the process of rescheduling non-essential surgeries and procedures.

Essential and emergency procedures and services will continue uninterrupted. The decision was based on the need to limit exposure and minimize further spread of COVID-19 among patients and visitors as well as healthcare professionals. It also allows each healthcare organization to conserve resources as the entire medical community faces a diminishing supply of critical protective equipment. The elimination of non-essential and elective surgeries and procedures will also ensure the most time-sensitive and medically necessary care can be prioritized and delivered quickly.

Patients impacted by this decision can expect to be contacted directly from their healthcare provider with additional instructions. Questions regarding how this decision will impact upcoming appointments or procedures should be directed to each patient's healthcare provider.

Northwest Georgia medical leaders will continue to work together aggressively and compassionately to provide the highest level of medical care. Each healthcare organization is taking the necessary steps to protect the community and keep the public informed as the situation evolves.