



NORTHERN REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Choose Well. Choose Northern.

December 31, 2020

Good Afternoon Team

As you know, COVID numbers have unfortunately been rising in our area. As a result, NRH is seeing unprecedented inpatient volumes. Our inpatient census today is 100, with 75 acute and 25 skilled patients. Last year, at this time, our total census was 77. We have been focused on growing services and jobs at NRH but certainly never dreamt that COVID would be part of our hospital growth strategy. We expect that at least the first several months of 2021 to remain very busy here.

Not only our hospital, but all hospitals in our region are busy caring for a surge in COVID patients as well as the patients we normally serve. In particular, NRH is now averaging 30 inpatient COVID patients per day. Our ED is now consistently holding 12 to 16 admitted patients at a time. Referral facilities are also full and not accepting transfers, making even appropriate referrals wait in our ED.

Further, many local nursing homes are not accepting or restricting new admissions. Our own team members have been hit hard and currently 25 are out of work due to COVID. Right now, even traveler staff are not readily available. These are situations that have never before been seen here at NRH. However, our goal is to continue to offer high quality medical care to our community and to COVID and non-COVID related patients.

To help mitigate the above dynamics (at least short-term), we have recently implemented the following:

- Utilizing old Fast Track area for ED overflow.
- Secured additional bedside monitors from the State and additional bipaps and ventilators from Surry County EMS.
- NRH SNF has started taking admissions again.
- Moved staff from non-clinical areas into clinical services to support our frontline personnel.
- Continue to operate under our Emergency Operations Plan.
- Met with the MEC today to discuss the current situation and take action to restrict elective surgeries beginning January 4.
- Administered 250 COVID vaccines to NRH staff with another 400 available to NRH late next week.
- Working closely with the local health department and neighboring hospitals to coordinate COVID care efforts.

I wanted you to be aware of our current situation and thank you and our medical staff for working extra hard during this high census period. Our patients and community appreciate our service and hospital. As predicted this past March, 2020 has been a very challenging year for NRH and our team of care givers. I trust that 2021 be better in many ways.

In addition to saying "Thank You" for a job well done, all employees have been gifted an "NRH Logo Wear Store Credit Voucher" of \$35.00 toward your next purchase(s) from the store. Ashly Lancaster will communicate details of the online store opening and how to redeem your credit voucher early next week.

We wish you and your family a healthy, safe, and prosperous New Year. It's a true honor to work and serve with you at NRH.

All the best in 2021.



Chris A. Lumsden, FACHE
President & CEO
Northern Regional Hospital
830 Rockford Street
Mount Airy, NC 27030
Office: 336-719-7101
Cell: 336-529-7852
clumsden@wearenorthern.org
www.choosenorthern.org
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