



Maryland  
Hospital Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Maryland Hospitals: Safe. Ready. Waiting.**

**Elkridge, Md.** – Maryland hospitals and health systems are saving lives every day during the coronavirus public health emergency, yet they are still seeing a potentially dangerous trend. Across the state there are substantive declines in the number of patients coming in for emergency treatment.

Some hospitals in the state report seeing half or even fewer of the patients they did pre-COVID in their emergency departments.

Evidence suggests that people with serious health conditions or symptoms may be avoiding hospitals out of fear of catching COVID-19 or contributing to its spread. Yet, delaying or avoiding care can lead to complications, long-term health problems, and, in some cases, death.

“It always has been and continues to be safe to enter any hospital in Maryland,” says Bob Atlas, president and CEO of the Maryland Hospital Association. “Protecting the health and safety of patients, staff members and visitors remains the top priority for all of Maryland’s hospitals.”

On May 6, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan announced he would lift some restrictions in place during the public health emergency, including on some medical procedures. He also assured Marylanders that it was safe to seek out care they may have delayed during the crisis.

“Many Marylanders may have put off important procedures, screenings and other things that they really need to attend to. If there is something you’ve had to delay ... you should be able to now take care of those important, time-sensitive procedures now,” Gov. Hogan stated.

It is critical, as our state responds to the needs of COVID-19 patients, that Marylanders experiencing non-COVID health concerns seek out the medical treatment they need. Ensuring people access to medically necessary treatment will prevent their health from worsening during this difficult time and allow hospitals to fulfill their core mission: to care for people.

Atlas notes, “Hospitals throughout the state are Safe–Ready–Waiting to provide critical care and keep Marylanders well during this difficult time.”

To learn more, visit [mhaonline.org/safereadywaiting](http://mhaonline.org/safereadywaiting).

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**About the Maryland Hospital Association**

*The Maryland Hospital Association serves Maryland's hospitals and health systems through collective action to shape policies, practices, financing and performance to advance health care and the health of all Marylanders. MHA will be Maryland's most effective advocate for improving health care across our state and the health of all Marylanders. For more information, visit [www.mhaonline.org](http://www.mhaonline.org).*