

## ■ NEWS HALTON HEALTHCARE RESUMES NON-URGENT SURGERIES

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Halton Healthcare announced that it has started to resume non-urgent surgeries and procedures at the three community hospitals in Milton, Oakville and Georgetown.

Denise Hardenne, president and CEO of Halton Healthcare, said in a media release that the hospitals had to postpone elective surgeries and procedures due to the pandemic, but carried on with urgent and emergent care such as cancer treatment and kidney dialysis. In June, Halton Healthcare received approval to begin the restart process after meeting the requirements set by the government for all Ontario hospitals, including the ability to quickly respond to an increase in COVID-19 cases.

As part of Phase 1 of the restart plan, Halton healthcare hospitals will be contacting patients to reschedule their surgeries and procedures. Patients will also receive a call in advance of the appointment about the new screening protocols.

The safety precautions that have been put in place include:



Graham Paine/Torstar

Non-emergency surgeries and procedures are once again be conducted at local hospitals.

• Screening visitors for COVID-19 symptoms at hospital entrances

• Reconfiguring waiting rooms and other areas to support physical distancing

• Installation of protective barriers such as Plexiglas in public areas

• Scheduling appointments with specific arrival times to prevent overcrowding. Patients may be asked to wait outside if they arrive too early.

According to the release, future phases of the restart plan include more complex surgeries requiring a hospital stay, cardiorespiratory medicine appointments, ambulatory care and additional endoscopy capacity.

"This has been an unprecedented and challenging time and I am proud of how our teams are responding to the pandemic. We have received enormous support from our communities and appreciate everyone's patience as we work to safely resume services," Hardenne said.

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