



Media Contact:

Nemours Children's Health System
Megan Bildner, Public Relations Specialist – NWFL
248.214.5791
Megan.Bildner@nemours.org

Nemours Children's Specialty Care and West Florida Hospital Return to Full Operations for Elective Surgeries

Surgeons and Specialists with West Florida Hospital and Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Pensacola, rescheduling procedures with parents and caregivers

Pensacola, Florida, June 16, 2020 – As the Northwest Florida medical community transitions from planning for a COVID-19 patient surge to a recovery phase, West Florida Hospital, along with pediatric surgeons with Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Pensacola, are providing elective surgeries as providers have the necessary precautions and preparations in place. A limited number of elective procedures were performed in the last few weeks, but this week, West Florida Hospital's outpatient ORs are fully operational.

“COVID-19 has affected the pediatric specialty patient community that Nemours has been working to support for over twenty years. Because of the effects on families, many surgeries and routine care had to be postponed. We are now ready to resume our clinical care in a way to keep all safe. The process will be different than before but we are closely following the CDC guidelines to keep our associates, patients and their families' safe,” explained Dr. Mary Mehta, Chief Medical Officer at Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Pensacola.

Nemours is currently ramping up operations and is potentially expected to resume full volume in the first couple of weeks of June. The clinic is currently operating at 100% pre-COVID volume and is staying in line with the six-foot social distancing safety regulation by staggering patient appointments. Nemours providers are also seeing patients via Nemours telehealth application, CareConnect, on top of the 100%.

Measures our facilities are taking to keep children and families safe

Many of the precautions West Florida Hospital, Nemours Children's Specialty Care locations have put into place for the COVID-19 pandemic will remain for the time being. “Our patients safety is and always be our number one concern. We know that many of the children's surgery cases were postponed due to the pandemic but we want to reassure parents not to delay surgery any longer and we have been preparing for a very safe environment for the surgery to occur,” said Dr. Mehta.

Some of the protective measures include:

- Social distancing is maintained to ensure 6 feet of distance in waiting rooms and common areas
- Prescreening by phone and telehealth.
- COVID-19 testing before surgery (if the surgeon deems it necessary) Screening patients, visitors, physicians and team members for COVID-19 symptoms, including temperature checks, prior to entry to West Florida Hospital
- Requiring face covering or masks for all patients, visitors, physicians and team members
- Disinfecting and cleaning common areas is completed with increased frequency
- Increasing emphasis on existing infection prevention measures, such as clean hands only!
- Care teams have the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed to keep children, family members, team members and medical staff safe
- COVID-19 patients and suspected COVID-19 patients are cared for in a dedicated area by the same staff, and not throughout the hospital. Negative-pressure airflow rooms prevent contaminated air from leaving the hospital room.
- Continued limited visitation for surgeries and hospital procedures
- Expanded virtual care options by Nemours, West Florida Hospital

“We know that this is a stressful and challenging time for everyone, especially the patient families that depend on us, but we are very grateful for your flexibility and support with these new processes as we get back to doing what we love: taking care of children like our own,” said Dr. Mehta.

Our patients, families and team members are of the utmost importance to us. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nemours is working closely with our states’ departments of health and following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines. This includes using the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies.

We greatly appreciate our communities’ outpouring of support and willingness to help. Information about donation of goods can be found [here](#).

For large/bulk donations please email covid19donations@nemours.org to schedule your drop off. You can download, print and fill out this [tax form \(PDF\)](#). Please bring this form with your donation.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call us at (850) 505-4700.

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About Nemours Children’s Health System

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system that owns and operates the two free-standing children's hospitals: the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in five states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org, and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect. [Nemours ReadingBrightstart.org](http://NemoursReadingBrightstart.org) is a program dedicated to preventing reading failure in young children, grounded in Nemours' understanding that child health and learning are inextricably linked, and that reading level is a strong predictor of adult health.

Established as [The Nemours Foundation](http://TheNemoursFoundation) through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.