



Memorandum

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Date: March 16, 2020
From: Chief of Staff (11)
Subj: Clinical operations during COVID-19
To: All Clinical Providers

Our Veterans need our care and face-to-face visits may be necessary. Providers should avoid any delay that will negatively affect the outcome or palliate severe or worrisome symptoms.

However, to the extent possible, to minimize face-to-face patient visits for all elective appointments, beginning today:

- **Primary Care & Mental Health (including CBOC's)**
 - Review your upcoming scheduled appointments.
 - Reschedule all elective face-to-face appointments to May 1, 2020 or later.
 - Make an effort to see as many patients as possible by VA Video Connect (VVC), telephone call or E-consult.
 - Cancel and re-order routine / non-urgent labs.
 - Face-to-face group appointments should be cancelled and if possible, rescheduled as group VVC or group telephone calls.

- **Specialty Clinical (Medical/Surgical, Pharmacy (see additional guidance below), Social Work (see additional guidance below), Sensory & Rehab)**
 - To the extent possible, convert face-to-face consults to eConsults or telephone-based care.
 - Reschedule elective face-to-face visits to May 1, 2020 or later.

- **Surgical Cases & Ambulatory Procedures**
 - All truly elective and non-urgent GI procedures should be rescheduled as above.
 - All elective dental.

- Imminent risk procedures: All procedures that will have significant consequences for Veterans' health if not addressed in a timely manner will be done with **review by the service chief.**
- **If you have any questions, please contact your service chief.**

VA Providence Pharmacy Official Guidance for Prescription Requests in Response to COVID-19

- At this time, Pharmacy is switching to an all mail-order system in order to limit exposure to COVID-19. Outpatient Pharmacy will focus on emergent prescription needs for in-person pick up.
- Emergent prescriptions include post-surgical, emergency department, mental health needs and discharge medication(s). All other medications and supplies will be mailed. Veterans may request refills and renewals by:
 - Contacting the refill line 1-866-363-4486 select 1 for Pharmacy and then select 1 for the automated line.
 - Mailing in refill slips
 - Pharmacy Customer Call Center at 1-866-400-1241
 - Requesting them through My HealtheVet
- Please allow 7-10 days for prescription delivery. Veterans may request expedited shipments and may request changing routine medications from 30-day fills to 90 day fills by:
 - Contact Pharmacy Customer Call Center at 1-866-400-1241

**VA Pharmacy cannot send patients 90-day fills of controlled substances, some supply items and certain high-risk medications or specialty medications.

***Pharmacy will not fill more than 90 days' supply of maintenance medications or honor early refills.

[Memorandum - COVID-19 Guidance for Geriatrics and Extended Care Home and Community Based Services Programs.pdf](#)