Dear Colleagues,

While we all share concern about the spread of COVID-19, we know that patient care and treatment for conditions unrelated to the virus continue to be an urgent need, and collaboration with you simply cannot wait. In accordance with guidelines set forth by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), we are once again scheduling [types of appointments and procedures] for patients in need of urgent and elective care.

Telehealth has become a critical service during the pandemic, and we want you to know that we can schedule phone or video visits as appropriate so that your patients can receive care without leaving home. Our staff can provide your patients with the information necessary to successfully execute these appointments. Some of your patients may have a complex condition and may also benefit from an opinion from a subspecialist, and telehealth can be a simple and effective way to connect your patient to the appropriate physician.

[If desired, add specific language around the importance of telehealth for continued treatment for this specific patient population.]

If an in-person visit is necessary, rest assured that we will provide information prior to their visit to help them feel comfortable in the physician office and hospital environment and have extensive safety measures in place to help protect patients, physicians and staff, including the following:

* A robust screening process for everyone who enters our care facilities, including thermal scanning temperature checks and symptom screening
* Universal masking requirements in hospitals and ambulatory facilities, with face masks provided to those who arrive without a mask
* Robust staff training in the use and conservation of PPE
* A no-visitor/no-companion policy, with some exceptions allowed as necessary for patient comfort
* Creation of dedicated inpatient units for patients with COVID-19 to minimize the risk of exposure to other patients
* Rigorous and frequent cleaning and disinfecting of our facilities, including high-touch areas and common spaces
* Extensive physical distancing policies, with reconfiguration of seating areas and restricted elevator use to ensure compliance
* Touchless hand sanitizer dispensers available throughout our facilities

In addition, as we reactivate certain medical services, we are maintaining adequate resources to respond to any potential surge of COVID-19 cases, and continue to monitor and adapt to the latest safety guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and IDPH on testing, diagnosis and clinical care.

It is our responsibility to continue providing the highest quality care to patients and their families, and we value the powerful collaboration with physicians like you to help achieve positive outcomes.

In this challenging time, we remain committed to working with you to deliver better medicine to all of our patients.

If you have any questions about our COVID-19 response and patient safety, [provide preferred ways for them to communicate with your office or department, use XXX.XXX.XXXX format for phone numbers]. To refer a patient, [add options to refer patients – phone, email, Epic].

As always, thank you for trusting Northwestern Medicine.

Sincerely,

[Physician(s)]

**[Optional section]**

**Additional Resources**

For the latest information on COVID-19 from Northwestern Medicine, including visitor policies and safety measures, visit **nm.org/covid-19**.

[Option to add additional links to research and other sources of information specific to COVID-19 and this patient population that may be of particular interest to referring providers.]