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**Contact Name: Jill Sudhoff-Guerin
Vermont Medical Society
802.917.5817
jsudhoffguerin@vtmd.org**

Vermont Medical Society Applauds New Guidelines on Resuming Some Non-Urgent Health Care Services and Urges Patients to Seek Necessary Care

MONTPELIER – May 4, 2020 – The Vermont Medical Society (VMS) applauds Governor Scott and the Department of Health Commissioner, Dr. Mark Levine, for releasing [guidance](#) today allowing for certain non-urgent health care services to resume in Vermont and urges Vermont patients to call their health care clinicians to discuss any health care questions or concerns.

Earlier today, the Governor and Commissioner Levine made the announcement that Vermont health care practitioners can begin to provide some elective health care services, including non-essential out-patient clinic visits, diagnostic imaging and outpatient surgeries and procedures. The Vermont Medical Society thanks the administration for its work developing this guidance, as delaying health care can put Vermonters at unnecessary risk for more severe health issues later.

While many non-essential procedures, surgeries and visits were postponed in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health officials made it clear that those decisions were made to preserve personal protective equipment for health care professionals, not because hospitals or doctor's offices are unsafe places to visit.

Practices are currently employing new ways of seeing their patients, including the use of telemedicine, telephone check-ins and performing well-visits curbside. For patients being seen in the office, practices have always had safety protocols, but have now further adjusted their operations, putting new policies and technologies in place to keep patients and families safe during office visits.

VMS has been actively working with the Agency of Human Services and with the Vermont Association of Hospital and Health Systems (VAHHS), HealthFirst and Bi-State Primary Care Association, to develop and inform this guidance.

VMS President, Cathy Schneider, MD, and Section Chief of Surgical Services at Mt Ascutney Hospital and Health Center says, "The VMS applauds Governor Scott and Commissioner Levine for working with the Vermont Medical Society, and the broader health care community, to deliver clear guidance on reopening Vermont's health care services and facilities. We assure our patients that we are able to safely provide the care they need. They can trust we will follow these guidelines and that their health and safety concerns are our top priority."

Now is the time to contact your practitioner's office and ask about scheduling your appointment. There is no reason to put off care. Please be reassured that medical offices are ready to see you and are taking every precaution to keep you safe.

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About the Vermont Medical Society: The Vermont Medical Society is the leading voice of physicians in the state and is dedicated to advancing the practice of medicine by advocating on behalf of Vermont's physicians, physician assistants and the patients and communities they care for. The Society serves its 2,400 members through public policy advocacy on the state and federal levels, as well as by providing legal, administrative and educational support, producing a rich flow of news and information and offering member benefits that increase medical practice effectiveness and efficiency. For more information, visit www.VTMD.org.