Florida’s hospitals are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our patients, employees, and communities. This has been, and will continue to be, our top priority. With our mission to care as the guiding principle, the Florida Hospital Association developed several recommendations for consideration as hospitals resume elective procedures.

The ‘OPEN’ Plan, our recommendation for safely resuming elective surgeries and procedures, is based on guidelines recently released by the White House, American Enterprise Institute, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Advisory Board, the American College of Surgeons, the American Society of Anesthesiologists, the Association of peri-Operative Registered Nurses and the American Hospital Association.1

1. OBSERVE THE COVID-19 RATE OF OCCURRENCE IN THE COMMUNITY.
   - Resumption of elective surgeries and procedures should not occur without sustained reduction of COVID-19 and Person Under Investigation case counts.
   - State of Florida to administer criteria by county following Guidelines for Opening Up America Again “Gating”, which considers a reduction in the number of confirmed COVID-19, syndromic COVID-like illness, and the ability of the hospital to fully provide care to their community without implementing crisis care standards. Define thresholds to maintain adequate critical care capacity for potential COVID-19 or non-COVID-19 patient influx.
   - Monitor bed availability and define thresholds to ensure adequate critical care capacity for potential patient influx.

2. PREVENT TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19 TO PATIENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.
   - Attest to adequate personal protective equipment and ensure access to timely COVID-19 testing.
   - Implement routine screening of staff and visitors.
   - Require universal masking of all persons who enter the facility.
   - Adhere to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance on the appropriate isolation of patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.
   - Establish COVID-19 patient cohorts and dedicate staff.

3. ESTABLISH A TRANSPARENT AND COLLABORATIVE PRIORITIZATION PROCESS TO GUIDE RESTORATION OF ELECTIVE SURGERY AND PROCEDURES.
   - Hospitals should establish a multidisciplinary governance committee to clarify, interpret and make real-time decisions.
   - The process should be reflective of regional trends related to COVID-19, consider each institution’s resources and patients’ needs.

4. NETWORK WITH ALL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ACROSS THE CONTINUUM OF CARE TO FULLY RESTORE HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

1 White House, Guidelines for Opening Up America Again
American Enterprise Institute, National Coronavirus Response: A Road Map to Reopening
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Guidance for Providing Non-emergent, Non-COVID-19 Health Care
American College of Surgeons, et al, Roadmap for Safety Resuming Elective Surgery After COVID-19 Pandemic