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Commentary: Now is the time to get the medical care you need

Jun 11th, 2020 · Comments: 0

By Wayne A. Smith and Mark B. Thompson

According to a new Kaiser Family Foundation poll, 48% of Americans said they, or a family member, have delayed medical care because of the coronavirus pandemic. Of those individuals, 11% said their condition worsened as a result of the delayed care.

Unfortunately, we have heard similar stories here in Delaware, where individuals have avoided seeking medical attention because they fear they may come in contact with coronavirus at a hospital or medical office.

This is the wrong approach. You will be much safer seeking medical care when you need it than delaying care and letting your injury or illness worsen, or even become life-threatening.

Wayne Smith

Don't wait!

Now is the time to get the medical care you need. Delaware hospitals and medical practices are safe, open and ready to care for you. While many noncritical surgeries and procedures were canceled during the height of the pandemic to make room for COVID-19 patients, steady decreases in hospitalizations due to the virus have allowed elective and nonurgent services to resume.

Doctors, nurses, and hospital and health care workers have taken every precaution to ensure that patients are protected from infection when they come to their doctor's office or emergency room. From employee screening to extra cleanings of treatment rooms and common areas, Delaware medical offices and hospitals are doing everything possible to keep you safe from COVID-19.

Consistent with Delaware Division of Public Health guidance, Delaware hospitals and medical practices have begun to resume certain elective and nonurgent medical procedures and appointments, such as pediatric vaccinations, early child care, and management of existing medical or behavioral health conditions. Other services

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(including routine primary care visits) as prioritized by the health care provider may also resume as long as safeguards such as a two-week supply of personal protective equipment are in place.

“Delaware hospitals and health care providers are committed to returning to normal operations in a measured way that protects our patients and staff. We will continue to follow national and state guidelines, that include mitigation efforts, so that we can serve our patients in the safest manner possible,” said Terry M. Murphy, FACHE, president and CEO of Bayhealth and chair of the Delaware Healthcare Association board of directors.

Just as it is critical not to delay seeking medical care for an illness or injury that could get worse over time, it is also important to keep up with regular preventive care.

Primary care allows for both prevention care and early identification and treatment of multiple chronic conditions that otherwise may result in costly and debilitating outcomes. Recent declines in hospitalizations, coupled with possibility that the spread of COVID-19 may lessen this summer signals that now is a good time to get the care you need, particularly as some experts are forecasting a second wave of COVID-19 this fall.

Mark Thompson

“It is critically important that Delawareans prioritize their health care and not postpone vaccinations, annual exams, follow-up appointments or preventive testing, as well as any health concerns. Delaware’s physicians are prepared and ready with strong safety precautions in place to protect patients and staff – now may be the safest time in our health care history to see a physician,” said Dr. Joseph J. Straight, president of the Medical Society of Delaware.

If you are still uncertain about seeking in-person medical care during the pandemic, telehealth remains an important option for seeking nonemergency care. Telehealth can be provided for a variety of services ranging from routine primary care visits to screening for COVID-19. Rather than avoiding care all together, inquire about your medical provider’s telehealth services. You may be surprised to learn that many more providers are now offering telehealth during the pandemic and a majority of insurance plans cover telemedicine without a co-pay.

Now is the time to get the medical care you need. Delaware hospitals and medical offices are open, safe and ready to care for you.

Wayne A. Smith is president and CEO of the Delaware Healthcare Association. Mark B. Thompson is executive director of the Medical Society of Delaware.

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Delaware State News
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Teachers share how to talk about racism

By Brooke Schultz
Delaware State News

From the Delaware Department of Education's Facebook page and all the way to Japan, a video crafted by Delaware educators is opening the conversation for speaking to students in the wake of George Floyd's murder at the hands of a white police officer and as protests continue locally and nationally.

"I think we all just felt it was important to let our students know that we are here for them through out this entire situation and that we will do our best to support them in any way possible," said Stacey Villa, a kindergarten teacher in Chester Elementary School District. "There wasn't much coming out, from an educator's perspective that we could see, so let our students know that we supported them."

The video was created, edited and written by Ms. Villa and teachers Debra Taylor, Tim Crawford and Nicole Manderson. It included nearly 50 Delaware educators from up and down the state.

"I don't think any of us expected to get that many in the video from the beginning, but I definitely think that a lot of educators all around do share the same opinion we have, wanting to be there for their students, but a lot of people were just unsure about how to go about it or how to kind of start that conversation," Ms. Villa said.

Ms. Taylor, a fifth-grade teacher in Capital School District, described it as a way to initiate the conversation.

"A lot of teachers don't know how to talk about it. Talking about racism, talking about disparities, it makes them uncomfortable to speak about and I feel like it was a very good introduction for teachers to be able to start a conversation with their students," she said.

"An Open Letter From Delaware Educators to our Students," which was posted to YouTube Monday, has accrued more than 6,000 views as part of the larger conversation the state is dealing with racial justice and police brutality.

Ms. Floyd's arrest and murder May 25 in Minneapolis was racial on camera. The white officer, as shown, was later charged with second-degree murder.

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CHURCH HOSTS VIRUS TESTING

By Katie Reeder
Delaware State News

REHOBOTH BEACH — Any guest visitor of the Rehoboth Boardwalk knows the beachside zone is marked by the truss of a line, ball-curling alleys, carts rolling into claw machines, and child-rearing in delight on their favorite rides. Yet these beachside truss of Rehoboth Beach are not likely to be in the same magnitude to the same site before.

Boardwalk crowds aren't the same this year as for with the continued care of Pandemic, and the limited to new openings at Rehoboth Beach and Dunes.

East Church, general manager of lead and a fourth-generation member of the Peninsula, the family who own the facility, said state officials have given them a concrete date on when they will be permitted to open.

"It's not going to be the same as that, we're used to," Ms. Curry said. "The amount of it is, it's going to be different, but we're going to adapt and change."

See Beachside — Page 3

Delaware Headlines with the Delaware National Guard leads a drive a COVID-19 test kit at Whitmore Episcopal Church in Cambridge on Thursday. Three months into the outbreak, Delaware has seen more than 15,000 cases and 800 fatalities. See Page 7 for the story.





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