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HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

As of this morning, 1,091 New Mexicans have tested positive for the novel coronavirus and 19 patients have died. More than 27,000 tests have been administered. Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

In her news conference yesterday, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham addressed the impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on New Mexico's economy. The drastic slowdown in economic activity, coupled with public health orders to close businesses and keep people close to home, have had a serious impact on the state's revenues.

Gross receipts taxes have dropped sharply, state income tax revenues are expected to decline due to rising unemployment, and tax revenues from oil and gas extraction have ebbed as global energy prices continue to slide.

The governor indicated she is starting work on an economic recovery plan for the state that may allow some businesses to reopen, and she has previously mentioned the need for a special legislative session to revise the budget that was approved in February before the impact of COVID-19 was being felt in New Mexico.

At the same time, our net margins for the UNM Health System have been affected by the steps we are taking to prepare for a potential surge in COVID-19 patients, such as canceling elective surgical procedures. We expect these losses will be offset to some extent by emergency federal funding that will flow to the Health Sciences Center and the University due to the stimulus packages that have already been approved (and others still under consideration).

We are still building our budgets to show an employee compensation increase for FY 21, but we will all need to prepare for the likelihood that any type of compensation increase for next year will depend on the net impact of this crisis on the finances of the Health Sciences Center and the University as a whole.

I did want to recognize Dr. Jon Marinaro and Jenny Rodriguez, a nurse from the TSICU. You may have seen their photo during the Governor's press conference. I want to thank them for delivering ventilators to Farmington and helping train our partners.



As you can tell, there are many variables at play, and we still don't have all the answers, but I promise to keep you informed as more information becomes available. Please know that I believe you – our faculty and staff – are our most valuable resource. And as always, I'm grateful for your hard work and dedication.

Warm regards,

Paul B. Roth, MD, MS
Chancellor for Health Sciences
CEO, UNM Health System
Dean, UNM School of Medicine