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### 2020-04-23 A Message from Chancellor Roth

Paul B. Roth

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# HEALTH SCIENCES

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## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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## A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

The COVID-19 outbreak has posed tremendous challenges for everyone in New Mexico – but I'm proud to say it has also brought out the very best in our dedicated health care professionals.

Today, I'd like to tell you about the coordinated statewide planning process underway to deal with the pandemic, which I believe has played a role in flattening the curve of new cases and improved outcomes for people requiring treatment.

Dr. Mike Richards, our Senior Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs, has spent the past few weeks leading the New Mexico Department of Health Medical Advisory Team. This team has done a remarkable job of developing a surge plan that ensures that patients will be rapidly referred to the facility that will best meet their needs.

They have developed a "hub-and-spoke" model that pairs smaller community hospitals (the "spokes") with larger "hub" hospitals located around the state. This will help prevent community hospitals from being overwhelmed, while directing patients to facilities with the required equipment and clinical expertise.

The model includes a centralized assessment and dispatch center that will determine the best destination for each new patient, as well as identified fixed wing and helicopter medivac capability to provide rapid transport where needed.

This planning effort has also led to the opening of the former Lovelace hospital on Gibson Boulevard in Albuquerque to house COVID patients. It will be staffed by teams from UNM, Presbyterian Healthcare Services and Lovelace Health System. This is a great example of the cooperative efforts that have characterized the response throughout the state.

Another care site is due to become operational at Miyamura High School in Gallup. This facility is adjacent to the Navajo Nation, where a substantial number of COVID cases have been reported.

I want to emphasize that the needs of people living in tribal communities throughout New Mexico are very much on our minds, and we will do everything we can to provide for their health care needs as this pandemic unfolds. No matter where they live, all New Mexicans are in this together – and we will get through this together.

Warm regards,



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

Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest COVID-19 updates.

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