



New York Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

May 15, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Commissioner Howard A. Zucker, MD, JD
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower-Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Re: Elective Medical Procedures

Dear Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Zucker:

The New York Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (NYSGE) represents more than 1,000 gastroenterologists and physicians-in-training who wish to express their appreciation for your commanding and humane leadership during this pandemic.

Our hospital-based members have continued to provide emergency gastroenterology and endoscopy services on the frontlines during the battle against COVID-19 while others, those in office-based practices, have had to close down and await reopening. Both groups have deferred many thousands of elective procedures, some of which are cancer-related, until such time as it is safe to resume.

The Department of Health's April 29, 2020 Directive, regarding Resumption of Elective Outpatient Surgery, excludes non-hospital facilities such as Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASC) and Ambulatory Endoscopy Centers (AEC) which provide essential endoscopy services for the diagnosis and treatment of many gastrointestinal conditions in safe and controlled environments. Many such procedures allow for early diagnosis and treatment of disease and thus can help to avoid more morbid and costly interventions.

NYSGE has been at the forefront in providing local and national guidance for healthcare workers in our specialty with regard to safety and personnel protection and we are well-aware of the safeguards that need to be in place to protect our patients and staff. NYSGE asks you to consider ASCs and AECs in your reopening strategy at the earliest opportunity.

Leaders from NYSGE are available to discuss this further at your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amrita Sethi, MD, MSc
President