Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton
Changes to Services and Procedures in Response to COVID-19

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton (NHCP) and its branch health clinics continue to serve the health care needs of our active duty service members, their families, and other eligible beneficiaries.

While the response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues, providing medical care to service members and all other eligible beneficiaries is a priority. Military and dental treatment facilities (MTFs) are thoughtfully and cautiously resuming services, including routine appointments and elective procedures, as local conditions allow and in alignment with the Department of Defense’s (DoD) health protection condition (HPCON) framework and the administration’s “Opening Up America Again” plan. NHCP continues to encourage the use of virtual care, when appropriate, and is taking all necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of our patients and staff.

As we are able to increase availability of routine and preventive appointments as well as elective procedures, health care providers will prioritize cases to maintain active duty readiness and deployability. Health care providers and specialists will also determine whether the risk of delaying a procedure outweighs safety concerns. Careful attention will be paid to local conditions and changes to the level of services available will be adjusted as required to best protect patients and staff and reduce spread of the virus.

NHCP team is dedicated to providing the safest, highest quality care during this extraordinary time. As the situation continues to evolve, the following resources will be used to share information and updates related to any changes in services:

- NHCP Website:
  - https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/cpen/newSite/Pages/default.aspx
- NHCP Facebook (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton):
  - https://www.facebook.com/NavalHospitalCampPendleton/
- NHCP Instagram (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton):
  - https://www.instagram.com/navalhospitalcamppendleton/?hl=enNaval
- NHCP Twitter (@NavHospCampPen)
  - https://twitter.com/NavHospCampPen
1. **DoD Talking Points**

   - DoD continues to support state and local authorities across the country combat COVID-19 while safeguarding mission readiness.
   
   - Local conditions drive Commanders’ decisions to adjust Force Health Protection policies and procedures.

   - We urge all Service member, DoD employees, and their families to follow proper personal safety precautions.

   - *Take care of one another.* Commanders are instructed to do what is right to ensure safety and the health of their force. We urge all of our people to look out for one another. We’re all in this together – as we always have done, together is how we will get through this.

2. **Navy Talking Points**

   - The Navy is closely monitoring the outbreak and is implementing mitigations -- the health and well-being of our Sailors and their families remains our top priority.

   - The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the CDC are the federal government leads for the response to the virus.

   - The Navy follows CDC guidelines. We encourage all Navy personnel and their families to follow the guidance put out by the Office of Personnel and Readiness and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

   - The Navy will follow CDC guidance for healthcare providers. Additional reference material is available at health.mil.

   - We encourage our Sailors to seek the advice of shipboard or Naval Medical Facility health professionals if they believe they are unwell.

   - The Navy recognizes that there may be barriers to accessing mental health care so have worked to ensure there are many ways to get help. Sailors and Marines can get help through traditional channels like mental health clinics, and there is also mental health care available in primary care clinics through the Behavioral Health Integration in Primary Care clinics. Chaplains and non-medical counselors are also available inside and outside Sailors’ units.

     - In response to COVID-19, the Navy Psychological Health clinical community has shifted normal outpatient care to virtual care across most platforms (MTF and operational). This was due to the rapidly escalating Health Protection Condition (HPCON) measures across the enterprise and the need to minimize COVID-19 spread in outpatient and inpatient mental health settings.
• The Navy enforces HIPAA guidelines and ensures the privacy of our Sailors. Continue to respect the privacy of our shipmates and their families. Patient information shall only be shared on a “need to know” basis to support public health efforts.

3. Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton Talking Points

• Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton is taking all necessary precautions to protect the health and safety of patients and staff as we carefully and deliberately resume services in a phased approach.

• Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton is a safe place to receive medical care and staff are taking every precaution to reduce the spread of COVID-19 with appropriate use of personal protective equipment, requiring everyone who enters the facility to wear cloth face coverings, and disinfecting equipment and commonly touched surfaces in accordance with CDC guidelines.

• The NHCP team remains committed to providing safe, high quality care to patients

4. Communication Channels

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton will ensure stakeholders, beneficiaries and staff are able to access up-to-date COVID-19-related information and resources through a variety of communication channels. As the situation evolves, the following resources will have updates to any changes to Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton services:

• NHCP intranet (CAC-enabled):
  o https://cpen-vm-s3/

• NHCP Website:
  o https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/cpen/newSite/Pages/default.aspx

• NHCP Facebook (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton):
  o https://www.facebook.com/NavalHospitalCampPendleton/

• NHCPTwitter (@NavHospCampPen)
  o https://twitter.com/NavHospCampPen?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwca mp%5Eserp%7Ctwq%5Eauthor

• NHCP Instagram (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton)
  o https://www.instagram.com/navalhospitalcamppendleton/?hl=en
5. **Initiatives to Reduce Spread of COVID-19**

- **Flu Tent:** Our flu tent will allow patients with respiratory illness symptoms (fever, cough, and shortness of breath), a history of travel, and believed exposure to COVID-19, to be screened prior to entering the emergency department (ED) at NHCP. The flu tent began providing services March 6, 2020, and is open 24/7. Those who are seeking evaluation for flu-like illness or potential COVID-19 infection will be directed to the flu tent where they will be checked in, triaged, and evaluated by a licensed provider, all within the tent. During the triage process, the providers will determine if further evaluation and testing is needed, or if patients can proceed home for self-observation. The flu tent is primarily a screening process to determine the right course of care for patients and not all patients will be tested.

- **Pharmacy Tent & Drive-Thru Pharmacy:** A pharmacy tent was stood up March 20, to minimize the foot traffic inside the hospital. The tent is for patients either picking up refills or filling new prescriptions from outside the hospital and hours of operation are Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. NHCP is also leveraging the 13 Area drive-thru for picking up prescriptions, new or refills. The main hospital has absorbed the workload for all refills for NBHC Port Hueneme and Temecula due to decrease in staffing at the branch clinics.

- **Drive-Thru Screening:** Our drive-thru screening site is an appointment-based screening site for pre-surgical patients and pre-deploying service members where we conduct COVID-19 test collection prior to surgery or deployment. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7 a.m.-4 p.m.

6. **Medical Services**

**Bottom Line Up Front:** Protecting the health and safety of our patients and staff and conserving limited resources are our top priorities at this time and NHCP is taking the following actions:

- Resuming wellness and preventive visits, prioritizing care to high risk patients and preventive care that was deferred, particularly for maintaining active duty readiness and deployability.

- Limiting dental services to readiness exams and non-aerosol generating procedures until conditions change.

- Continuing to encourage use of telehealth and virtual health for care delivery as appropriate.

- Continuing to limit points of entry at all facilities to ensure all staff, patients, and visitors are screened for COVID-19 symptoms.
• Limiting visitors to ensure social distancing is maintained.
• Ensuring outpatient facilities and waiting areas have adequate space for maintaining social distancing.
• Promoting use of the Nurse Advice Line for care options for all beneficiaries, 1-800-TRICARE, option 1.
• Continuing to appropriately triage patients with COVID-19 symptoms.
• Designating specific rooms for known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

Acute Services: Acute services across all service lines continue to be maintained.

Routine Services: Each clinic is assessing the capability, need, and safety for resuming routine services at this time. Clinical decisions to restart services and procedures will be based on a risk assessment by subject matter experts.

Mental Health: Mental Health will continue to provide outpatient and acute services, observing social distancing and COVID-19 screening procedures to ensure the safety of patients and staff.

Continuing Psychiatric Care: Patients requiring continuing psychiatric care will remain in their barracks/housing and utilize telehealth care options. Some patients may require in-person care and NHCP will continue to support that care. Patients will contact the outpatient Mental Health Clinic to schedule a telehealth appointment or discuss their care needs.

Emergency Department Psychiatric Evaluations: There is no change to emergency department psychiatry evaluations and care.

Outpatient Mental Health, SARP, and TBI: These services have transitioned to telehealth, meaning care is provided telephonically for all non-urgent care. Patients can be brought in for urgent care situations, as determined by a provider. Patients should contact the clinic to schedule a telehealth appointment.

Primary Care: All Area Branch Health Clinics (ABHC) and NHCP will remain open for primary care services and acute care. Face-to-face appointments for urgent care services will be available as well as virtual appointments for routine medical needs.

The Pediatrics Clinic will continue well child visits and immunizations for children, newborn through 12 months.
Appointments can be made through the appointment Call Center at 760-725-HELP (4357). Clinic hours, which are Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., are not being reduced at this time.

**Surgical Services**: Services will be maintained for all sub-specialties (ENT, general surgery, oral maxillofacial surgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics and urology) to include urgent, emergent, acute, post-op, cancer, trauma, and readiness and LIMDU needs.

Elective procedures have resumed, health care providers at NHCP will prioritize cases to maintain active duty readiness and deployability. Health care providers and specialists will also determine whether the risk of delaying a procedure outweighs safety and logistical concerns.

**Clinical Support Services:**

**Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT)**: PT and OT clinics are open for normal business hours at all locations. Currently, the clinic is seeing patients with acute injuries and postoperative conditions taking priority to allow for social distancing. Patients with chronic conditions, including pain will likely experience longer wait times to schedule appointments but will be evaluated and given home exercises.

**Pharmacy**: The NHCP pharmacy has expanded coverage to support the flu treatment clinic and rapidly prepare over-the-counter cough and cold medications, and prescription medications, such as Tamiflu. Hours of operation are:

- Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Saturdays, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Pharmacy tent**: A pharmacy tent was stood up March 20, to minimize foot traffic inside the hospital. This service is for patients either picking up refills or filling new prescriptions from outside the hospital. Operating hours are Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

**13 Area Drive-thru Pharmacy**: The 13 Area drive-thru is being leveraged for refill and new prescription pick-up. Patients can select this option when calling the refill line at 1-866-286-8249.

**Radiology**: NHCP’s Radiology Department is back to routine appointments and supporting all emergency department, admitted, and surgical or post-operative patients. Routine obstetric ultrasound and nuclear medicine cases are also still being supported.

**Dental Services**: Dental services will continue to provide care in support of active duty readiness and emergencies. Dental clinics are performing routine annual exams for active duty members, as well as aerosol producing procedures in closed door treatment
rooms for class II and III (treatment of active dental disease) active duty members. Dental cleanings are still on hold at this time.

Billing Office: There have been no changes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. Modified Visitor Policy

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety our patients and safe, NHCP is restricting visitors during the pandemic. In alignment with current visitation policies at hospitals throughout California, NHCP is prohibiting visitors across ALL areas of the hospital.

The following areas will allow only one (1) healthy adult visitor who has been screened for COVID-19 by NHCP staff:

- Labor & Delivery
- Mother Baby Unit
- Pediatric patients (accompanying visitor must be a parent or caregiver)
  - Two adults can be accompany infants two weeks and under for their appointments.

Medical providers and nurses will work with families on a case-by-case basis who have special circumstances, such as a critically ill or injured family member.

Patients with mobility limitations can be provided an escort upon arrival to the hospital and can contact the Quarterdeck for assistance at 760-725-1288.

8. Questions and Answers

Q1: Does the hospital have the ability to test for COVID-19?
A1: We continue to remain in close coordination with the Naval Health Research Center to have access to test kits and ensure compliance with all testing procedures associated with patients exhibiting possible COVID-19 symptoms. NHCP is not a testing lab. While NHCP does not have the ability to conduct confirmation testing, providers are able to collect samples and submit to DOD or local laborites for testing and confirmation.

Q2: Where can Navy Sailors and Navy civilians find more information concerning COVID-19/all-stop guidance?
A2: Navy military members and their families who have questions regarding COVID-19 guidance or entitlements associated with stop movement should contact the MyNavy Career Center (1-833-330-6622) or email AskMNCC@navy.mil. Detailers are ready to
support all order modifications and commands should work with their placement officers. Navy civilians should work with their local Human Resources Office.

Q3: What actions is the hospital taking during this pandemic?
A3: Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton remains open and dedicated to serving the health care needs of our active duty service members, family members, and beneficiaries. As Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have implemented additional health protection measures to minimize foot traffic throughout the facility and help mitigate the spread of the virus, enabling us to better preserve the health and well-being of patients and staff. They remain committed to providing safe, efficient, and high-quality care to their patients.

Q4: Is Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton resuming services?
A4: While the pandemic response continues, providing medical care to service members and all other eligible beneficiaries is a priority. NHCP is thoughtfully and cautiously resuming services, including routine appointments and elective procedures, as local conditions allow. We will prioritize cases to maintain active duty readiness and deployability. Health care providers and specialists will also determine whether the risk of delaying a procedure outweighs safety concerns. Careful attention will be paid to local conditions and changes to the level of services available will be adjusted as required to best protect patients and staff and reduce spread of the virus.

Q5: How is Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton conducting the resumption of services (i.e. new hours, times, locations)?
A5: NHCP will thoughtfully and cautiously increase availability of routine and preventive appointments as well as elective procedures as local conditions allow and in alignment with the Department of Defense’s (DoD) health protection condition (HPCON) framework and the administration’s “Opening Up America Again” plan. NHCP continues to encourage the use of virtual care, when appropriate, and is taking all necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of our patients and staff. As changes are made to services and operating hours, staff will communicate through a variety of means to inform beneficiaries.

Q6: What specific services is Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton resuming?
A6: Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton is resuming wellness and preventive visits, prioritizing care to high risk patients and preventive care that was deferred, particularly for maintaining active duty readiness and deployability. Additionally, limited dental services will be provided for readiness exams and non-aerosol generating procedures. Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton will continue to encourage use of telehealth / virtual health for care delivery as appropriate.
The following Q&A are from the TRICARE website: https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/BenefitUpdates/Archives/03_11_2020_tracking_covid19_know_the_symptoms_and_how_to_get_care

Q7. What should I do if I feel sick or think I was exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19?

A7. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, have been in close contact with a person sick with COVID-19, or traveled to areas where infection is prevalent, don’t make an appointment or walk into your local military hospital or clinic. Instead, stay at home and contact your provider or health care professional at any of the following:

- Nurse Advice Line (1-800-874-2273, option 1), who will assess your symptoms

Q8: How can I reach a registered nurse?

A8: There are several ways to reach a registered nurse:

- Call the Central Appointment Line, or your civilian provider appointment line.
- Call the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line (1-800-874-2273, option 1).
- Send a secure message through TRICARE Online Patient Portal to speak with the healthcare team.

As always, if you are experiencing a medical emergency, contact 911.

9. Additional Resources

- NHCP intranet (CAC-enabled):
  - https://cpen-vm-s3/
- NHCP Website:
  - https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/cpen/newSite/Pages/default.aspx
- NHCP Facebook (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton):
  - https://www.facebook.com/NavalHospitalCampPendleton/
- NHCP Twitter (@NavHospCampPen)
  - https://twitter.com/NavHospCampPen?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor
- NHCP Instagram (@NavalHospitalCampPendleton)
- [U.S. Navy](https://navylive.dodlive.mil/2020/03/15/u-s-navy-covid-19-updates/)
  - [CDC](https://www.facebook.com/CDC)
  - [CDC](https://twitter.com/CDCgov)
  - [CDC](https://www.youtube.com/user/CDCstreamingHealth)
  - [CDC](https://www.instagram.com/CDCgov/)
- **CDC Guidance for ships:**
  - [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html)
- **World Health Organization:**
  - [WHO](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)
  - [WHO](https://www.facebook.com/WHO/)
- **Navy & Marine Corps Public Health Center:**
  - [Navy](https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcp/program-and-policy-support/Pages/Novel-Coronavirus.aspx)
  - [Navy](https://www.facebook.com/NavyAndMarineCorpsPublicHealthCenter/)
  - [Navy](https://twitter.com/NMCPHC)