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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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Don't Delay, Seek Care Today!

ST. IGNACE - Over two months ago, several safety measures were implemented for hospitals statewide in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This action included postponing elective surgeries, non-essential procedures, and in-person clinic visits. As the pandemic has evolved, Mackinac Straits Health System (MSHS) has complied with executive orders and taken the necessary steps to keep the safety of patients and health care workers a top priority.

Many patients have been waiting to schedule their preventive and routine visits. Now, with an abundance of caution, Mackinac Straits has resumed outpatient surgical services, as well as other procedures including imaging, laboratory, physical rehabilitation, and in-person clinic visits.

"Patients should not avoid or delay coming to the hospital if they are in need of medical care," said Karen Cheeseman, MSHS Chief Executive Officer. "In addition to our very thorough infection control protocols, we are adhering to required visitor restrictions. We have helpful screeners at our entry ways, all staff are wearing masks for additional safety, and we have adjusted all areas to ensure proper social distancing."

"Our hospital and clinics are safe places to be," said Christine McPherson, MSHS Board of Trustees Chair. "Our goal is to continue providing the excellent care that families expect from us. I encourage patients - don't delay, seek care today!"

"Our team will continue to ensure that the surgical services we offer adhere to strong safety and infection control guidelines," said Dr. Robert Currier, Ophthalmologist and MSHS Chief of Surgery. "Excellent care for our patients is our top priority. Our award-winning surgical team is dedicated to delivering high quality, compassionate care, every day."

Loretta Leja, MD is a longtime family physician at Rivertown Medical Clinic in Cheboygan and serves as MSHS Chief of Staff. "The necessity of having in-person tests and screenings should never be underestimated," said Dr. Leja. "Our clinics are open and ready to provide high-quality, safe, preventive care to those who need it. Visiting your doctor regularly for preventive care is an important part of staying healthy."

Mackinac Straits Health System (MSHS) serves the Straits of Mackinac region with local access to high quality health care. MSHS is based at their St. Ignace Campus that includes a 15-bed Critical Access Hospital which houses a Rural Health Clinic, Oncology Clinic, Outpatient Surgical Center, Tribal Health Clinic, Straits Area Pharmacy, Emergency Room, Fast Care Clinic and 48-bed long-term care facility (Evergreen Living Center). Other locations include Bois Blanc Island Medical Center, Mackinaw City Medical Clinic, Mackinaw City Specialty Clinic, Mackinac Island Medical Center, and the Rivertown Medical Clinic in Cheboygan. For more information on these locations and the services available, visit www.mackinacstraitshhealth.org. MSHS is affiliated with the Munson Healthcare System, and is an equal opportunity provider and employer.