

Several doctors from across specialties at Atrium Health are noticing an alarming trend due to COVID-19 fears - many patients are putting off coming to the hospital for their urgent health care concerns, and as a result this is making it harder for patients to get the appropriate, timely care they need.

Delaying care in many situations makes it harder for the staff to treat the patient, and can result in a less than favorable outcomes. In particular Atrium staff have noticed this with stroke patients, heart attack patients, trauma related events, and women in labor opting for a home birth or waiting until the last minute to come in for care.

An Atrium spokesperson said, "We want to remind you that Atrium Health hospitals are indeed open for all essential healthcare needs, and you should not wait to come in or call 911 for assistance. Additionally, we can discuss all of the additional safety measures that are in place to protect patients and loved ones from COVID-19 at this time. We also want to remind people to have a daily check in with loved ones or friends who are alone, by telephone or otherwise, as they may catch someone experiencing symptoms early enough for that person to get treatment and have a better outcome."

Additional Food Benefits for More than 800,000 Children Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic

On Monday, April 20 Governor Roy Cooper announced that North Carolina has been approved for the new Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program, to help families purchase food for children impacted by school closings due to COVID-19. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) is working to operationalize the program and families will begin to receive this benefit in coming weeks.

"So many families are in need, especially with so many out of work right now. This approval helps people get assistance faster to feed their families," said Governor Cooper.

The program provides a benefit on an EBT card to North Carolina families whose children are eligible for free and reduced lunch at school. Families will receive \$250 in P-EBT benefits per child, provided in two installments, with the possibility of an additional benefit if North Carolina schools are closed beyond May 15. Families will be able to use the P-EBT benefit to purchase food items at EBT authorized retailers, including most major grocery stores.

Families will not need to apply for the P-EBT program. P-EBT eligible families already receiving Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits will receive an additional benefit on their existing EBT card. P-EBT eligible families not already enrolled in FNS will be mailed a new EBT card in the next few weeks. Families who receive a new EBT card will receive a letter from DHHS in the mail explaining how to activate and use their card.

"As our schools closed, many families across the state worried about where their next meals would come from—and we knew we had to take action," said NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen, M.D. "The P-EBT program will provide extra help buying groceries for the families of the more than 800,000 children who normally receive free and reduced lunch at school."

North Carolina is one of the first four states to receive federal approval from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide P-EBT benefits, which are entirely federally funded.

The new P-EBT program is in addition to other services families may be participating in. As announced previously on March 30, 2020, all families that receive Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) will receive the maximum amount allowed for March and April 2020 for their household size. Families are encouraged to continue utilizing feeding programs at local school and community meal sites for free, nutritious meals for children.

You Decide:

What 'Letter' Will the Economic Recovery Follow?

By Dr. Mike Walden: There is now little question among economists – and, I expect, most people also – that the economy is in a coronavirus-induced recession. The definition of a recession is actually rather simple. A recession means the economy takes steps backward rather than steps forward. In other words, the economy contracts, or shrinks, rather than grows and expands. Signs of a recession are increased unemployment, reduced household incomes and lower sales and revenues for businesses.

The fact we're now in a recession shouldn't be surprising. Mandating that a significant portion of the economy shuts down, and that people restrict their travel in order to curtail the spread of the virus, was sure to send the economy into a nosedive. Our economy runs on human interactions and trade. When, for health reasons, those can't occur, our economy doesn't work.

We're all hoping these actions will contain and ultimately eliminate the virus soon. People are anxious to get their lives back to normal. But in terms of the economy, what will 'normal' be after the virus crisis? Will the economy simply pick up where it left off? Will jobs, incomes, sales and stock values come back as quickly as they went away? Or will we be in for a long period of modest improvements, with years passing before we fully recover?

Economists see four possible paths that any post-recessionary period can take. Interestingly, they are described in the form of alternative letters of the alphabet.

- An 'L' shaped recovery is what we don't want. Here the economy improves very, very slowly – if at all - once the recession ends. It may take several years or even decades for the lost jobs, incomes and sales to be recovered. Because the recovery is so slow, people and businesses feel as if they're in a never-ending economic hole. Japan experienced an L shaped recovery in the 1990s.

- We also don't want a 'W' shaped recovery. In this situation there is a recession followed by a recovery, but then a second recession hits followed by a second recovery. In other words, the economy goes through a double-dip recession with a recovery at the end of each dip. An example is the two recessions in the early 1980s. Today some experts worry that after being contained sometime this summer, the coronavirus could re-emerge in the Fall and cause a second round of shutdowns and a second recession.

- A 'V' shaped recovery is what we want. This kind of economic rebound is quick and strong. Jobs, incomes and sales return to their pre-recession levels within months rather than years. The recessions of the early 1990s and 2000s had V-shaped recoveries. Those who see the virus being quickly beaten and the economy returning to normal by the fall are expecting a V kind of economic boost.

- The last possibility is a 'U' type of recovery. Like the V recovery, the economy does get out of the recession, but it isn't immediate. Instead, a U-shaped recovery can take months or possibly several years. The recovery from the Great Recession of 2007-2009 was of a U-shape.

While most hope for a V-shaped recovery, many economists think a U-shape is more likely for several reasons. First, while the just-passed multi-trillion-dollar federal stimulus package is designed to save businesses and keep them intact until after the virus crisis passes, unfortunately I don't think this well-intentioned effort will be totally successful. There will be some business bankruptcies and closures, meaning unemployment will stay elevated for some time.

There will also be some restructuring in the economy after it gets back on its feet. Many businesses will have innovated and changed their way of operating during the virus crisis. For example, home delivery may continue to replace some in-person dining and shopping even after the virus is gone.

These changes will create some winners but also some losers. Many workers may experience extended unemployment until they reconsider how their skills can be used in the post-virus economy.

There will be changes from – what I call – the re-adjustment factor. Just as with the Great Recession, the virus crisis will have lasting effects on our views and behaviors for decades. Some form of 'social distancing' will continue, resulting in reductions for large gatherings at sports and entertainment venues. People may purposefully shy away from any gathering of - say - more than 50 people.

Last, we may be in for a period of extended societal fear: fear of whether the virus lingers, fear of the possibility it or a new virus will return and fear and anxiety over all the changes the virus has caused in our lives.

One economic consequence of fear is often a reluctance to take risks or commit to large purchases. Hence, one casualty of the virus could be homebuying and big-ticket items like vehicles and furniture.

The conclusion is we may be living with the impacts of the coronavirus for many years. Once the virus is eliminated, the first question is which letter of the alphabet the economic recovery will follow. You decide!

Church News

* All events are subject to change because of the COVID-19 situation. You may want to seek confirmation of events.

APRIL 26

Men's Day Program
At New Life Trinity Church, 3pm

MAY 31

100 Women in Hats Fundraiser at New Life Trinity Church, 2:30pm for Anson County Domestic Violence Coalition with Min Peggy Hubbard of West Rocky Ford Baptist Church in Wadesboro

JUNE 14

Family & Friends Day At New Life Trinity Church, 2:30pm. Theme "Value Your Family & Friends"

ONGOING

* All events are subject to change because of the COVID-19 situation. You may want to seek confirmation of events.

Wednesday Bible Study

At New Meltonville MBC, 7pm

Brotherhood Meetings Every 3rd Saturday at N Wadesboro Baptist Church, 6pm. Bible study & meal, all men welcome

Wednesday Intercersory

Prayer at New Meltonville MBC, 6:30pm

Bible Study

At Sneedsboro Church, Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30pm, everyone invited

Prayer Line

Each Wednesday, Reaching the Lost Church of God from 7-8pm. Call 704-695-1842. Someone will be available to assist you and pray with you

Sunday Youth Day

Every 5th Sunday at Cedar Creek MBC

Bible Study

Every Tuesday night at 7pm at Garris Grove MBC

Victory in the Sanctuary

Every Saturday at 11:30am at Pathway to Peace, 11775 Hwy 109S, Peachland. Info 704-695-1441

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Events

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APRIL 23

Board of Education Budget Development Workshop in Administrative Office Board Meeting Rm, 320 Camden Rd in Wadesboro. 10am

APRIL 25

Free Groceries for Families in Need at Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center. 12 noon-2pm. Call 704-826-8737 for eligibility info & details. Located at 13349 Hwy 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Fire Department.
www.burnsvilleic.org

MAY 13

Free Groceries

For families in need Mobile Food Pantry at Wingate Baptist Church, located at 109 East Elm St. in Wingate. Register 8-10am. Call for details 704-694-2445

JUNE 5

Reveal Party

For the new season at the Ansonia Theatre. Invitation only for sponsors to have first dibs on seats, performance dates & the reveal of the 2020-21 season. To become a sponsor or for info, call 704-694-4950 or visit ansoniatheatre.com

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