VMH EXPANDING SERVICES, ENCOURAGING PATIENTS TO CALL CLINIC TO MAKE APPOINTMENT

(Viroqua, WI, 6/8/2020) – The COVID-19 pandemic has created many changes in health care. On a local level, Vernon Memorial Healthcare (VMH) states that while changes must be made to keep VMH an independent and viable health resource, it will continue to keep health, wellness, and prevention as key strategic goals for the communities it serves.

VMH Chief Executive Officer, David Hartberg said, “One thing that’s stayed crystal clear through this pandemic is that we are stronger with the help of our communities. VMH has a long history of collaborating with area businesses and community members. While we must think about things differently than before COVID, we will continue to be innovative and make decisions based on the goal to keep Vernon Memorial Healthcare an independent, rural health care organization.”

VMH continues to carefully and tactfully expand services and areas of service in an effort to provide the safest care for patients. Some things may seem different as these areas begin to expand.

Patients should expect to be screened prior to their appointments and are asked to report any changes in symptoms prior to their procedures or appointment, all that enter VMH facilities are required to wear a mask or cloth facial covering upon entry, and physical distancing is recommended as much as possible. Patients should also contact their VMH Clinic and Pharmacy to confirm temporary hours/days of operation that remain in place.

For those that would prefer to receive care virtually, clinical services have expanded their care to include virtual visits like video and telephone visits. All patients should contact their clinic by phone or via the MyCare app to be triaged for their appointment. Some appointments will be approved for a virtual visit, while others will need to have an in-person visit.

VMH provider, Dr. Joel Charles said, “We want to encourage our patients to contact us whenever they need us. Our facilities are safe for care and we need to remember that continued care for those with chronic conditions is very important. No matter if they are
being seen virtually, or in-person, continuing their care is necessary to keep them from developing worse conditions.”

While the COVID pandemic has often been difficult to navigate the unknowns, one thing is certain; Vernon Memorial Healthcare has continued to care for community members of all kinds from moms and new babies to those with chronic conditions, the staff at VMH have been there every step of the way.

Hartberg said, “I am so incredibly proud of the commitment and passion that the staff at VMH have for our patients. While these times have not be easy, our communities must know that the people that are caring for you at VMH continue to keep your health and safety as their top priority.”

If you are experiencing any flu-like or new symptoms you are concerned about, it is recommended to call the VMH COVID-19 Nurse Line at 637-4990.

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**Vernon Memorial Healthcare**
Vernon Memorial Healthcare is an independent rural healthcare organization that consists of five clinics, four pharmacies, two assisted living facilities, an inpatient hospice facility, and hospital. Vernon Memorial Healthcare employs over 500 employees.

For more information about the services offered at VMH please visit [www.vmh.org](http://www.vmh.org).