Dear providers,

As the impact of COVID-19 builds in our hospital and community, it is important for us to conserve our resources, and to protect our patients and staff to reduce the spread of infection. The Department of Radiology has put in place policies that have successfully reduced the use of nonurgent outpatient imaging beginning early in the course of the COVID-19 outbreak. Sustainable practices now demand that we take further measures that will differ greatly from our usual ways of practicing. We are asking providers to **limit your requests for inpatient and emergency diagnostic imaging to those examinations which are critically important for patient care.** This has several goals:

- **To conserve personal protective equipment (PPE).**

**-To reduce patient transport and contacts throughout the hospital** to mitigate rate of spread

-**To protect our workforce in diagnostic imaging as well as nurses and other staff** involved in the processes of patient transport, preparation for, and cleaning after imaging studies.

Here are some guidelines:

* **Critically important studies should be expected to yield an actionable result** which will be required to determine the correct treatment plan, or guide changes. Examinations performed to check on the status of a process and not part of active decisionmaking, are discouraged.
* **“Routine” type imaging, such as daily chest x-rays, are discouraged.** Please limit orders to those examinations for which there is specific clinical need.
* **Order the highest yield examination for the clinical question**. If there is any question as to what best modality (e.g. CT, MRI, US) or protocol would be for a particular clinical question, or what the expected yield of diagnostic imaging would be, our radiologists can provide guidance.
* **For help with clinical questions, radiologists are available for clinical consultation.** If a consultation is needed, radiologists can be reached by calling the front desk in Radiology:
  + Main campus: (978) 937-6240
  + Saints campus: (978) 934-8237

Front desk staff will place callers in contact with the most appropriate radiologist to answer their questions. Please limit calls to clinical inquiries, as radiologists cannot answer scheduling questions.

**We request that ordering providers and their staff please be respectful to Radiology staff if examinations must be questioned or deferred.** These changes are being made to support the continued functioning of our hospital and our health care system during unprecedented times. We in Radiology recognize all of the hard work that you are doing and similarly, we are working very hard to provide the care that is needed for our patients in this health care crisis.

Sincerely,

Maryellen Sun, MD

Chief of Radiology