MISSISSIPPI COUNTY HOSPITAL SYSTEM

PRESS RELEASE

Mississippi County Hospital System Revises Entrance Policy to Limit Potential COVID-19 Spread

Blytheville (March 16, 2020)-With the increased number of COVID-19 cases in Arkansas, Great River Medical Center has revised its entrance policy in efforts to prevent potential disease spread in Northeast Arkansas.

Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, the hospital will limit the number of publically-available entrances to the Emergency Room entrance while allowing a maximum number of two patient visitors at a time. To provide even further protection, individuals will undergo screenings at the Emergency Room entrance, as recommended by CDC before receiving admittance.

Mississippi County Hospital System administrator, Chris Raymer said the hospital made a collective decision amid growing concerns an infected individual could unintentionally expose vulnerable patients, hospital employees, and visitors to COVID-19.

"Mississippi County Hospital System is not turning away patients or eliminating visitors," Raymer said. "We understand the importance that healthy social interaction plays in the healing process, but we are trying to protect those already in our care."

Great River Medical Center will operate one entrance 24/7, the Emergency Room entrance for patients seeking emergency care. In addition, the emergency room entrance will be the point of entry for all visitors from 4:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. All patients and visitors may utilize the Emergency Room designated parking location during this time.

Raymer said easily identifiable signage will provide guidance upon arrival.

"Our highest priority is your protection. We know changes can create confusion, and we’re committed to making the transition as seamless as possible," Raymer said.

Mississippi County Hospital System employees stand ready to help those needing assistance or directions.

During this time of heightened protection as recommended by the CDC, we may have an increase of wait times, for that we apologize. We want to limit your exposure as much as possible.

Raymer noted, the Great River Medical Center Fitness Center will be closed to all members until further notice. Again, the priority is protection.

Mississippi County Hospital System, a non-profit healthcare system based in Northeast Arkansas, serves as the corporate of Great River Medical Center-Blytheville and SMC Regional Medical Center-Osceola.

Mississippi County Hospital System will update its daily practices and guidelines towards COVID-19 from the CDC updated recommendations which is continuously changing every day.

Chris Raymer, MSN, FNP-BC, APRN, Chief Executive Officer

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