Surgery department outlines rapid response to COVID-19

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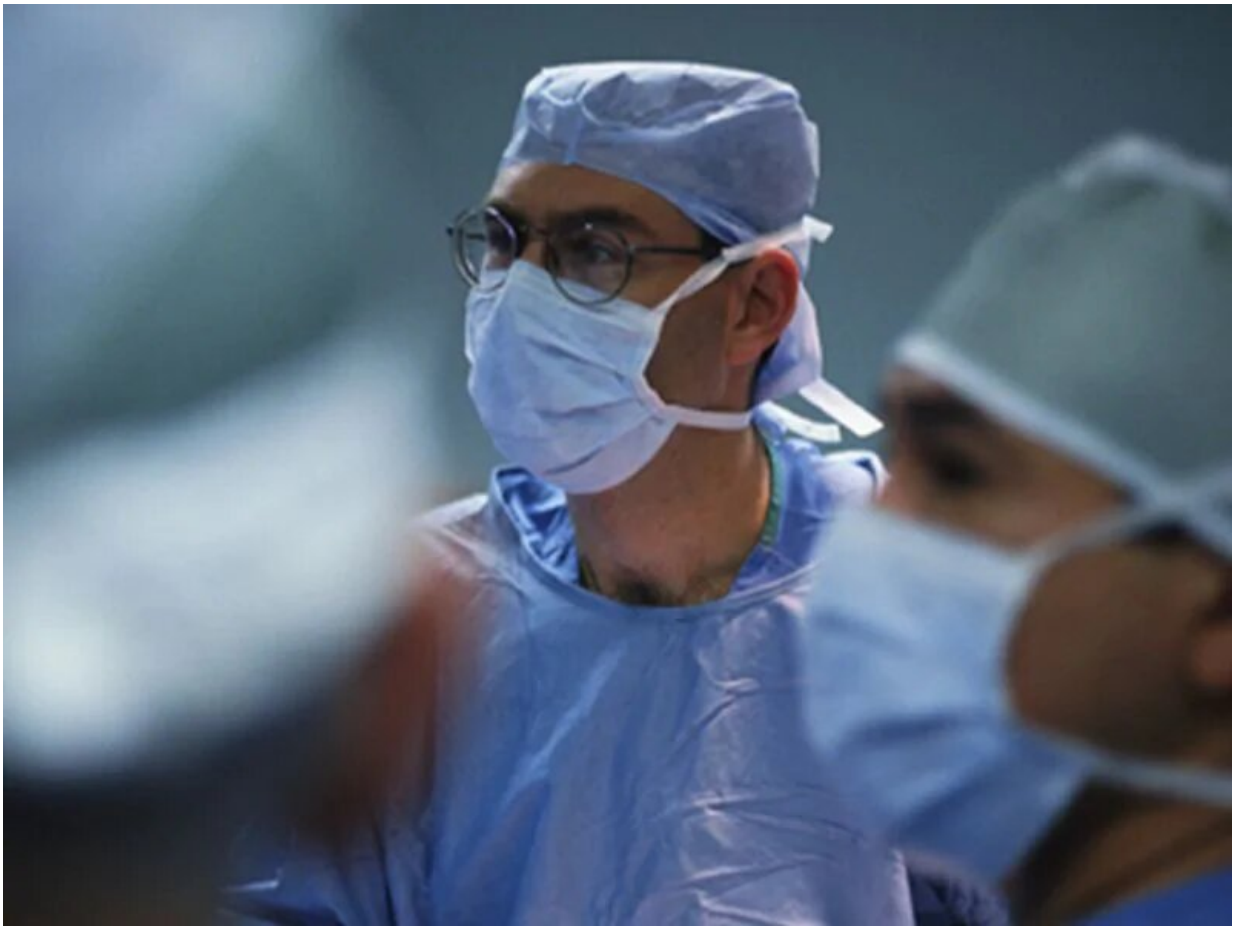

(HealthDay)—In a comprehensive rapid response plan, published online

April 9 in the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, surgeons from the University of California San Francisco present a strategy to triage surgeries to help manage health care resources during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Elizabeth M. Lancaster, M.D., from University of California at San Francisco, and colleagues outline the strategy of a single academic health system for addressing critical issues facing surgical departments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The researchers identified four critical issues: (1) developing a cohesive leadership team and system for frequent communication throughout the department; (2) ensuring adequate hospital capacity to care for an anticipated influx of COVID-19 patients; (3) safeguarding supplies of blood products and personal protective equipment to protect patients and providers; and (4) preparing for an unstable workforce due to illness and competing personal priorities such as child care. Through collaboration between the departments of surgery and hospital, the strategy included reducing operating room volume by 80 percent, securing a four-week supply of personal protective equipment, and creating reduced staffing protocols with backup staffing plans.

"By developing an enabling infrastructure, a department can nimbly respond to crises like COVID-19 by promoting trust among colleagues and emphasizing an unwavering commitment to excellent patient care," write the authors.

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