



# WASHINGTON COUNTY

PLYMOUTH, NORTH CAROLINA

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Date: February 14, 2019

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## **Public Service Announcement For Immediate Release**

This information is provided in response to the news that the Washington County Hospital or (WCH), will be on full diversion (not able to offer service) for all medical services effective at 10:00PM on February 14, 2019.

WCH has not been owned or operated by the Washington County Government since WCH was sold in 2007.

Washington County Government is actively seeking information from and involvement with the hospital management to understand the issues related to this diversion. We are also actively engaged with multiple state agencies, health care industry consultants, and special legal counsel, to monitor this situation and evaluate all options available to both the hospital and the county government in order to try to assist in bringing stability to and resolving this situation in a positive manner for the benefit of our citizens and community.

During this diversion, which we hope will be temporary and brief, Washington County Government would like to reassure all citizens and the public at large, that Emergency Medical Services or (EMS) which are owned and controlled directly by Washington County Government itself will continue to operate at a Paramedic level to treat, stabilize, and transport all emergency patients to the closest appropriate medical facilities surrounding Washington County. These may include the Emergency Departments listed below where treatment may be sought for any medical emergencies.

Patients will be transported to the closest appropriate facility for their condition at the time of evaluation. If the patient has a compelling reason to bypass that facility to another facility that is equal distance, the request will be taken into consideration. Currently, the closest facilities receiving patients are:

### **Washington County**

Vidant Chowan (Edenton ~ 25.3 mi)

Vidant Bertie (Windsor ~20.7 mi)

Vidant Beaufort (Washington ~35.0)

Martin General Hospital (Williamston ~21.2 mi)

### **Tyrrell County**

Vidant Chowan (Edenton ~29.5 mi)

Vidant OBX (Nags Head ~45.5 mi)

In cases where the patient has a condition that requires transport to a facility such as Vidant Medical Center in Greenville, a decision will be made in accordance with State EMS Protocols, and not as a matter of preference.

The County does not anticipate a significant change in EMS services as a result of the hospital diversion. We will continue to carefully monitor any impacts of this diversion, and take any necessary steps to insure the level of EMS services provided in both Washington and Tyrrell counties remains strong and capable of providing full service.

It is important to the preservation of life, safety, and property to remain calm, and not to over react to the news of this diversion. **If you have a medical emergency, please dial 911.**