

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Hospital and Health Research Institute Staff, Professional Staff and Boards

From: Jean Bartkowiak, President & CEO, and Dr. Stewart Kennedy, COVID-19 Incident Manager

Date: Tuesday, March 24, 2020

RE: **Ontario takes steps to ensure health care resources available during COVID-19 – What you need to know at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre**

Being responsive and nimble in our ever-changing environment is essential to safely care for our patients and support our regional efforts to respond to COVID-19. Throughout these extraordinary times, the health and safety of our staff, professional staff, patients, their families and community is our utmost priority.

The provincial government announced a temporary order under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA) to facilitate the ability of hospitals to implement redeployment plans to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The order directs and authorizes health service providers, such as our Hospital, to take reasonably necessary measures that facilitate the safe and efficient redeployment of staff to those areas where they are most able and required to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. It also authorizes our Hospital to take these measures irrespective of any collective agreement, statute, regulation, policy, arrangement or any other type of agreement.

Hospitals may be carrying out measures such as:

- Redeploying staff within different locations in (or between) facilities of the hospital;
- Changing the assignment of work, including assigning non-bargaining unit employees or contractors to perform bargaining unit work;
- Changing the scheduling of work or shift assignments;
- Deferring or cancelling vacations, absences or other leaves, regardless of whether such vacations, absences or leaves are established by statute, regulation, agreement or otherwise;
- Employing extra part-time or temporary staff or contractors, including for the purpose of performing bargaining unit work; and
- Using volunteers to perform work, including to perform bargaining work.

This order only applies with respect to the suspension of those provisions that are necessary to satisfy the redeployment objectives outlined in the order. Other collective agreement provisions continue to be in effect.

To ensure the adequate and appropriate level and distribution of health care staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, redeployment efforts have already occurred. Our Hospital will

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invoke these provisions in circumstances where they are needed to ensure safe, quality health care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your continued understanding and commitment during these challenging times.

For more information, please contact your manager.

All Hospital COVID-19 updates are available on the iNtranet at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>.

For more information about COVID-19, please contact the Thunder Bay District Health Unit at 1-888-294-6630 or www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus. More information is also available at <https://files.ontario.ca/moh-coronavirus-info-sheet-english-2020-02-18.pdf>.