

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Hospital and Health Research Institute staff and professional staff

From: Dr. Stewart Kennedy, COVID-19 Incident Manager

Date: Monday, April 6, 2020

RE: **Clarification on Distribution and Use of Procedural Masks**

Today, our Hospital began to implement a **procedural mask conservation plan**. The following provides clarification on a phased-in approach to this plan.

Phase 1: Effective today, April 6, 2020

Emergency Department: All staff and professional staff (nurses, physicians, support services staff, etc.) are provided with two procedural masks per shift from the ED Manager or designate. If a mask becomes visibly soiled or damaged, a replacement mask may be requested.

Areas of Unknown Risk of Exposure: Only staff and professional staff who provide direct patient care in areas of unknown risk will be provided with two procedural masks per shift from the area Manager or designate. Other staff working in these areas will be provided one mask per shift. This applies to:

- Renal;
- Cancer Centre;
- Labour & Delivery;
- Diagnostic Imaging;
- Operational outpatient clinics.

Procedural masks will be distributed to Managers of the areas listed above. All staff and professional staff working in these areas (whether it is their home department or not) will access masks from the area manager.

Staff and professional staff working in Areas of Unknown Risk of Exposure for a short duration (less than 15 minutes) and that can maintain physical distancing from patients should not wear a procedural mask. In all other situations, standard Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) procedures should be followed per Infection Protection and Control (IPAC) and Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) requirements.

Staff in All Other Areas: All staff and professional staff are to minimize the use of all PPE including procedural and N95 masks and follow standard Infection Control practices. This includes limiting the number of times entering a room that requires use of PPE. Refer to policy IPC-2-16 – Management of Novel Respiratory Infections.

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Staff and professional staff may use personal cloth masks at this time. The cloth masks do not replace PPE requirements as outlined by standard Infection Control practices.

Phase 2: Target Beginning Week of April 13

Cloth Masks: Delivery of 10,000 cloth masks is anticipated beginning the week of April 13. The current plan is for all staff working in inpatient areas to be provided with a supply of cloth masks. Allocations and plans to distribute masks will be communicated when finalized.

N95 Reprocessing: Our Hospital is investigating the potential for reprocessing of N95 masks. In anticipation of direction from Ontario Health, collection of masks will begin later this week. Additional details will be communicated shortly.

Additional phases of PPE conservation and collection are under discussion and will be communicated as needed.

A PPE "Frequently Asked Questions" resource will be prepared and made available to all staff and professional staff. To submit your PPE question, please email covid19@tbh.net.

For more information or to discuss any concerns, please contact your Manager.

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

Please contact TBDHU for more information regarding COVID-19 screening 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>