

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Staff and Professional Staff
From: Dr. Stewart Kennedy, COVID-19 Incident Manager
Date: July 14, 2020
RE: Mandatory masks for the protection of all

The health and safety of patients, staff, professional staff, scientists, learners and the community is our Hospital's utmost priority. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, **effective Wednesday, July 15, masks are mandatory for all patients and Care Partners while inside our Hospital.** The term 'mask' refers to all face coverings.

Hospitals throughout Northwestern Ontario are making masks mandatory for all people entering their facilities. This collaborative approach enhances successful infection control in our region and helps to normalize the use of masks.

I ask that all staff and professional staff support this important safety measure. Should you see someone in our Hospital who is not wearing a mask, please kindly remind them that masks are mandatory for everyone's protection and provide information as to where a mask can be obtained for their use while on site.

COVID-19 may be transmitted by asymptomatic persons. Wearing a mask can help to prevent this asymptomatic spread to others, especially in areas where physical distancing is not possible. Individuals who refuse to wear a mask inside the Hospital and do not require urgent care may be denied entrance.

A face covering must cover the nose and mouth and is intended to protect others from the spread of airborne droplets. Wearing a face covering or mask is in addition to maintaining physical distancing and practicing proper hand hygiene. People who are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition should advise the entrance screening staff, who will provide options.

All people entering the Hospital are encouraged to wear THEIR OWN FACE MASK from home. Inpatients who require a test or procedure outside of a designated care area and are unable to bring their own mask will be provided a procedure mask, which will be changed if/when it becomes soiled while in the Hospital. Outpatients and Care Partners who do not bring a mask will be required to obtain a disposable procedure mask from the screening stations located at the Hospital's West entrance or Emergency Department entrance for a suggested \$2 donation to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation. Only one mask will be available for personal use during the current visit due to limited inventory.

Reusable cloth masks will also be available for purchase at Season's Gift Shop within our Hospital when they reopen on July 27. Donations to the Health Sciences Foundation and profits from Season's Gift Shop support patient care.

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As patient care service volumes increase during Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's recovery phase, more patients and Care Partners will be entering the Hospital. This, combined with people traveling to Northwestern Ontario from outside of our region and a re-opening economy, increases the possibility of community spread.

For more information, please contact your supervisor.

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