

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: Thursday, August 13, 2020

RE: **Physical Distancing Guidelines**

The health and safety of all staff, professional staff, patients, Care Partners and the community is our utmost priority. Physical distancing remains a key component to preventing the spread of COVID-19. As such, Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Capital Planning have created the following Physical Distancing Guidelines for our Hospital:

PUBLIC TRANSACTIONAL DESKS & QUEUING LINES:

- Routine public check-in areas will be equipped with a physical barrier.
- Back-office areas that have limited public access will not be equipped with a physical barrier.
- Nursing stations will not be equipped with a physical barrier.
- All staff and patrons should be wearing a mask, except if sitting behind a barrier.
- Public areas will be equipped with floor decals for distancing while queuing.

WAITING ROOMS:

- Capacity of waiting rooms should be primarily managed by scheduling to limit wait times.
- Seating in waiting rooms should be occupied in an 'every-other-seat' fashion.
- If capacity becomes constrained, other options must be considered – such as waiting in cars, a callback process, etc.
- All occupants of a waiting room shall wear masks, as per Hospital policy.

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK AREAS

- Employees that sit facing each other or side-to-side will be seated at a 2 meter distance, or the space will be equipped with a barrier.
- Employees that sit back-to-back or back-to-side will be seated at a 1 meter distance between, or the space will be equipped with a barrier.
- Installed barriers will be at a minimum of employee head-height when seated (if normal office), or when standing (for sit-stand arrangements).
- If all options are not feasible, and alternate space is not available, then occupants will wear a mask when occupying the space.

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SERVICE & CLINICAL WORK AREAS:

- Employees will maintain 2 meter physical distancing; when not possible, employees will wear masks.
- Masks will be of the type suitable for the work involved as per Hospital PPE policy.

PATIENT CARE AREAS:

- Staff will wear appropriate PPE.
- Patients and Care Partners/Essential Care Partners will wear masks as per policy – unless alone in room or alone in an area contained by a barrier (i.e. curtain or divider).

STAFF LOUNGES & LUNCHROOMS:

- Employee breaks and lunchtimes should be staggered as able.
- Employees will maintain 2 meter physical distancing when in the lunchroom eating and unable to wear a mask.
- Cafeteria should be used if department capacity is of concern.
- Capital Planning will be reviewing lunchrooms for further assessment

MEETINGS ROOMS:

- Normal meeting room capacity is noted in ADMIN35 – Use of Meeting Rooms & AV Equipment.
- Pandemic meeting room capacity will be considered to be no more than one-third of the occupancy as noted in the policy – with seating arrangements to allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- Physical distancing should be maintained at 2 meters, unless masks will be worn during the meeting.
- Gatherings of no more than 50 people indoors is allowed based on the provincial directive for Phase 3; if the province reverts back to Phase 2 – gatherings will be limited to 10.

ELEVATORS:

- Regular elevator occupancy will be a two person limit and occupants will wear masks; exceptions are possible if proper PPE is worn (educational signage will be posted).
- Trauma elevator will be used based on clinical needs and capacity – with occupants wearing appropriate PPE.

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is a leader in Patient and Family Centred Care and a research and teaching hospital proudly affiliated with **Lakehead University, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and Confederation College.**

Le Centre régional des sciences de la santé de Thunder Bay, un hôpital d'enseignement et de recherche, est reconnu comme un leader dans la prestation de soins et de services aux patients et aux familles et est fier de son affiliation à **l'université Lakehead, à l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario et au collège Confédération.**

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CHANGE ROOMS & BATHROOMS:

- Occupants of multi-use bathrooms will maintain physical distancing and limit occupancy to two persons per bathroom (education signage will be posted).
- For change rooms, staff will wear masks if unable to maintain physical distancing

HALLWAYS & STAIRWELLS:

- Will remain 'two-way' as per status quo.

Directors have been meeting with Capital Planning to review their space and renovation submissions. Please be patient as they work through needs on a priority basis, as it will take some time to address all areas.

Clinical managers should ensure scheduling processes are leveraged to ensure physical distancing can be optimized.

Other physical distancing solutions such as virtual visitation, call-back, or alternates will also be considered on an ongoing basis.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to safety.

For questions or concerns, please contact John Ross or Anne-Marie Heron.

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