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: Thursday, November 19, 2020

RE: Mandatory use of procedure masks in patient care areas

The health and safety of all staff, professional staff, patients and the community is our utmost priority. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, **all staff and professional staff must wear level 2 procedure masks in patient care areas of our Hospital at all times.** A patient care area is defined as area where a patient receives care and/or services, including registration areas of the hospital, and transferring of patients.

Level 2 procedure masks are already available in patient care areas and inventory will be increased as required to meet demand. The change comes into effect on Friday November 20, and full compliance is expected. Staff and Professional Staff compliance will continue to be monitored via Joint Occupational Health & Safety inspections.

This change aligns with the most recent evidence with regards to COVID-19 and related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) best practices for the enhanced safety of all.

Cloth masks are appropriate for use in common areas, such as hallways and break rooms, as long as these areas are outside of patient care areas. A cloth mask may also be worn when entering the Hospital, and must be switched for a procedure mask when entering any patient care area.

The use of procedure mask practice is already implemented in many patient care areas of our Hospital, and for those areas there is no process change. Your ongoing diligence is appreciated for the protection of patients and staff. Review of the use of cloth masks is ongoing and further recommendations may be forthcoming.

Thank you for your continued commitment to keeping each other and our patients safe.

Please contact your manager with any questions or concerns.

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

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