

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Staff and Professional Staff

From: Dr. Peter Voros, Incident Manager

Date: March 12, 2021

RE: **COVID-19 Outbreak Declared on 1A Medicine Unit**

An outbreak of COVID-19 is declared on our 1A Medicine unit. The health and safety of all staff, professional staff, patients and the community is our utmost priority.

The decision to declare or end an outbreak is made in collaboration with Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU). The Ontario Ministry of Health defines a COVID-19 outbreak in a public hospital as: *Two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases (patients and/or staff) within a specified area (unit/floor/service) within a 14-day period where both cases could have reasonably acquired their infection in the hospital.*

The low threshold for declaring an outbreak ensures that outbreak management measures, including increased infection prevention and control practices, can be put in place swiftly to contain any further spread. In collaboration with TBDHU, a thorough assessment of the situation is underway, including contact tracing and enhanced surveillance and testing activities. Anyone who is considered to be at risk will be notified.

As a precautionary measure, **there will be no admissions to 1A Medicine until further notice.** For the safety of all, Essential Care Partners will not be permitted in 1A Medicine or 1A Oncology until the outbreak is resolved. Additional measures may be taken as needed to manage the situation.

This outbreak, combined with high numbers of admitted patients who are COVID-19 positive and the heightened need for critical care services, has prompted our Incident Management Team to advance **our hospital's internal COVID-19 pandemic response from Red (Control) to Grey (Lockdown).** This involves additional strategies to make both space and staff available to respond to increasing critical care needs. Medical and administrative leaders are investigating options regarding patient transfers, reduced elective procedures and alternative spaces to provide care within the hospital. Information will be provided as decisions are confirmed.

Sincere appreciation is extended to leadership, staff and professional staff for outstanding support and professionalism at this challenging time. Our collective empathy and ongoing diligence to infection control protocols will see us through this. If you need additional support, please access resources available at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/staff-wellness-resources/>.

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