MEMO

Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Staff and Professional Staff

From: Dr. Peter Voros, Incident Manager

Date: March 16, 2021

RE: Reinforcement of Mandatory Masks for Patients

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, it is mandatory that all patients wear masks while inside the Hospital.

To support a standard approach to managing patients who refuse to wear a mask when entering the hospital, the following actions will be implemented immediately:

- All patients who are scheduled for admission will be informed of the mandatory mask requirements as far in advance of the admission as possible, with a reminder at the point of admission, either in person or, if it is a scheduled admission, by telephone. Please ensure that the following language is included in all of your departments' pre-admission patient communications:

  "For the protection of all, everyone who is admitted to the hospital is screened for COVID-19 upon admission and periodically throughout the visit. If during the course of your stay, you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or learn that you have been identified as a contact of a positive COVID-19 person you must notify a member of your healthcare team. The symptoms of COVID-19 are listed in the inpatient information brochure."

  Important Notice *- Masks are mandatory while inside the Hospital. Even if a patient provides documentation from a Doctor or Nurse Practitioner indicating that they are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition, the attending physician at the Hospital will need to verify this. Only written medical documentation, such as a signed letter from a primary care provider, provided by or verified by the attending physician ensures a patient access to the Hospital without a mask. Patients will be provided with a procedure mask when they arrive at the Hospital and will be able to replace it daily and when it becomes damaged, soiled or dirty.*

- Patients who have a medical exemption for wearing a mask and require a test or procedure off of a unit should be identified in advance when possible, and should have their appointments booked at the beginning or end of the day, or when it is least busy in the receiving department. Refer to the document, "Process: Face-covering and additional measure requirements by inpatient circumstances and how to handle inpatient refusals"

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- If an issue arises due to patient's refusal to wear a mask and refusal to leave the hospital, Security can be contacted. If the patient refuses to leave the premises, Security will contact Thunder Bay Police for assistance.

I ask that all staff and professional staff support this important safety measure. Should you see someone in the 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.

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/.

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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