

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All Staff, Professional Staff, Volunteers, Learners and Contractors

From: Dr. Peter Voros, Executive VP, Patient Care Programs, Regional VP, Cancer Services, North West Regional Cancer Program and Amanda Björn, Executive Vice President: People, Culture, & Strategy

Date: October 25, 2021

RE: **Clarification of Eye Protection Guidelines**

It is important that we remain vigilant with hand hygiene and PPE practices in order to protect our staff, patients, and the health care system. **All workers (which includes all staff, professional staff, volunteers, learners and contractors) at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) are required to wear eye protection in clinical areas (inpatient and outpatient) or when providing patient care in a non-clinical area within 2 metres.** This means that when any worker enters a clinical area (inpatient and outpatient), eye protection is mandatory at all times. Eye protection is not to be removed unless a worker is:

- in a private office located in a clinical area.
- removing their eye protection to disinfect them.
- in a designated break area or meeting area/room where distancing of 2 metres can be maintained.
- leaving the clinical area to go on break and/or leave the Hospital.
- in a non-clinical area and is NOT within 2 metres of a patient.

This measure enhances your safety and protects the specialized acute care services we provide to those in need.

Common misconceptions/confusion regarding mandatory eye protection:

- *We only need to wear eye protection while providing direct patient care (DPC), and once DPC is complete, we can remove eye protection throughout the rest of the clinical area.*
 - **False.** A worker must wear eye protection at all times while in a clinical area. This includes in the nursing station and in the hallways on a clinical unit.
- *I am not required to wear eye protection in a clinical area because I do not provide DPC. (For example, ward clerks on an inpatient unit, or a worker from IT fixing a phone issue at a nursing station).*
 - **False.** ALL staff, professional staff, volunteers, learners and contractors must wear eye protections at all times when in a clinical area. Prior to entering a clinical area, ALL are required to don eye protection.
- *I work in an outpatient clinic, so I am exempt from mandatory eye protection.*
 - **False.** Outpatient care areas, as described above, are a clinical area and eye protection must be worn at all times.
- *I am entering a clinical area briefly to drop something off, so I am not required to wear eye protection.*

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- **False.** ALL staff, professional staff, volunteers, learners and contractors must wear eye protections at all times when in a clinical area. Prior to entering a clinical area, ALL are required to don eye protection.

The Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines indicate that contact with a positive COVID-19 person is considered high risk if eye protection was not worn. Visitors and patients are also encouraged to wear their own eye protection.

Your cooperation and compliance is appreciated.

Please contact your Manager with any questions or concerns.

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