

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: TBRHSC Directors, Managers and Coordinators

From: Jennifer Wintermans, EVP, Communications and Corporate Relations, COVID-19 Lead

Date: January 8, 2022

RE: Updated COVID-19 Contact Definitions for Admitted Patients

In response to the increase in cases of COVID-19 in our community and across the province, Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) has updated the definitions for COVID-19 contacts for admitted patients. The updated COVID-19 contact definitions for admitted patients are as follows:

Not a Contact:

A patient who had a transient interaction with the positive case (e.g., walked by the case or was briefly in the same room).

Low Risk Exposure:

Close contact (>15 minutes cumulative if indirect or ≤15 minutes cumulative if direct) with the positive case (e.g. within 2 meters in an enclosed common area) when the patient was wearing a surgical/procedure mask and the positive health care worker was wearing a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection.

High Risk Exposure:

Close contact (>15 minutes cumulative if indirect or ≤15 minutes cumulative if direct) with the positive case (e.g., within 2 meters in an enclosed common area) where either the patient was not wearing a surgical/procedure mask or the health care worker was not wearing a surgical/procedure mask or eye protection.

These definitions align with the most recent Ministry of Health Guidance and assist in determining patient contacts of COVID-19 positive health care workers. IPAC applies these definitions when conducting contact tracing and investigating exposures to ensure appropriate isolation and case management.

Please reference the *COVID-19 Contact Definitions for Admitted Patients Guidance Document*, found here <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidance-Documents-Contact-Definitions-for-Patients-January-8-2022.pdf>, which provides specific guideline details.

Staff are required to follow guidelines from Occupational Health and Safety regarding staff exposures.

Please contact the IPAC Department at 684-6094 if additional information is required.