

To: All Staff, Professional Staff, Learners and Volunteers

From: Jennifer Wintermans, VP, Quality and Corporate Affairs, COVID-19 Lead, and Adam Vinet, VP, Patient Experience and Chief Nursing Executive, Regional VP, Cancer Care Services

Date: December 9, 2022

RE: **Hospital's Internal COVID-19 Pandemic Response Level Moves from Red (Control) to Orange (Restrict)**

Effective, **Monday, December 12th**, our Hospital will be moving its internal COVID-19 Pandemic Response Level from **Red (Control)** to **Orange (Restrict)**.

This decision to move from Red (Control) to Orange (Restrict) is based on the decreasing number of positive COVID-19 cases in the community, region and province. In addition, the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations at our Hospital has been steadily decreasing as we see less active COVID-19 cases in the community.

Although we are seeing decreased activity with COVID-19, it is anticipated that we will continue to experience impacts due to Influenza and Respiratory Illnesses. For this reason, we are cautiously changing our response level and will continue to maintain the following restrictions and response activities to maintain our operational needs as we work through the demands of this current wave of illnesses.

- **Masking:** Continues to be mandatory for all except for when eating or within a private office. Level 3 masking remains required at all times.
- **Eye Protection:** Mandatory eye protection is required in all patient care areas or clinical settings, and in circumstances where face to face contact occurs (less than 2 metres) with no structural shielding in place.
- **Testing all new Admissions:** Remains status quo and continue to test with exceptions as previously approved (Mat/LD, Out-patient surgery, Endo)
- **In-person Meetings:** In-person meetings are permitted onsite and should follow all required precautions including masking and physical distancing. Masking is mandatory for all staff and volunteers. In-person meetings should also include a virtual option where room size does not permit adequate distancing or to accommodate individuals who are unable to attend onsite.
- **Contractors and Vendors:** Essential and high priority contractors and technical support and essential vendors will be permitted. General suppliers and general sales people should not be present onsite.
- **Emergency Department Precautions:** N95 masks required when treating patients that fail screening or require airborne and droplet precautions. All staff are required to wear Level 3 procedure mask and eye protection while on unit.

- **Education and Simulation:** No learner restrictions. All education on COVID-19 and IPAC measures to new staff will continue.
- **Physical Distancing:** Continue mandatory physical distancing where able of 2 metres.
- **Remote Work:** Continue at the discretion of the program/department.
- **Essential Care Partners and Care Partners:** Only 1 ECP and Manager discretion when considering alternatives or special circumstances. Continue to allow unlimited ECPs and CPs (2 at a time) 24hrs, for end of life patients and 1 ECP as needed and identified by the patient for palliative care patients. Please note that Version 12 of the [Guidance Document - Care Partner/Essential Care Partner](#) should be referenced under the Orange “Restrict” category. As a reminder, ECPs should be reminded of mandatory masking and follow the requirements as per ECP guidelines. Physical distancing should continue to be encouraged.

It is recognized that compassion and complex variables that often impact the patient care needs do not always align with these restrictions; there are considerations for exceptions. In situations that must deviate from the guidance, please make certain this is managed at the unit level.

Staff are reminded to complete the entrance screening tool prior to each shift, practice hand hygiene and wear PPE appropriate for the work environment.

All response activities are evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure they are effective and appropriate by Senior Leadership Council and leaders across the organization.

We appreciate the ongoing cooperation and thank everyone for their dedication to keeping our Hospital and community safe.

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