

To: All Staff, Professional Staff, Learners and Volunteers

From: Jennifer Wintermans, VP, Quality and Corporate Affairs, COVID-19 Lead

Date: December 22, 2022

RE: **Masking Reminder**

In order to keep our patients, families and staff safe, masking remains mandatory at all times when within our Hospital. Masks should be worn upon entering the Hospital and until exit, with the exception while eating, drinking or within a private office. This is to decrease the spread of COVID-19, influenza and respiratory illnesses that we are currently experiencing in our region.

With the holidays approaching, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit also strongly recommends the use of masking when in any public indoor space, to protect yourself and those at higher risk from illness.

Individuals entering our Hospital without a mask should be asked to wear the procedure mask they are provided during the entrance screening process.

Anyone entering and using the Hospital:

- Will be provided with a procedure mask at either the screening desk or outpatient area including the Emergency Department, Labor & Delivery, and outpatient clinics in other buildings;
- Masks are to be replaced when damaged, soiled or wet.
- Masks may not be removed unless consuming food or beverage.

We are asking all to monitor the use of masks when able to ensure the safety of our Hospital.

Some common messaging to encourage the use of a mask with any individual is provided below:

- Wearing a mask helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and helps protect you and people who are around you.
- Wearing a mask protects you as some people may have the COVID-19 virus and not know it.
- Being fully vaccinated does not exclude you from masking requirements.
- When masks are properly worn, they cover the nose, mouth and chin securely without gaps. Masks act as a barrier that reduce the chances of respiratory droplets

spreading the virus to other people.

Anyone refusing to wear a mask once on the Hospital premises should be kindly encouraged to wear a mask. If the individual is a patient, please reference the guidance document for inpatient and outpatient mandatory masking found here:

<https://comms.tbrhsc.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Guidance-Document-Inpatient-and-Outpatient-Mandatory-Masking-December-15-2021.pdf>

As well, please provide the patient with a mask refusal letter and inform them of the importance of wearing a mask. The letter can be found here: <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Mask-Refusal-Letter-TBRHSC.pdf>.

If the individual not wearing a mask is an Essential Care Partner (ECP), consider contacting the Care Partner Liaison to ensure compliance with masking requirements as an ECP.

All staff and professional staff are encouraged to support this important safety measure.

If an issue arises, please contact your Manager or the covering Manager. Additionally if the situation should escalate, please call Security. If the patient refuses to leave the premises, Security will contact the Thunder Bay Police Department for assistance.

We thank everyone for their continued cooperation and dedication to keeping our patients, families, and staff safe.

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