



To: All Staff, Professional Staff, Learners and Volunteers

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

Date: April 19, 2023

RE: **Transition of Pandemic Response Protocols – Phase 2**

[Phase 1](#) of our move to integrate our pandemic response protocols into operations have been completed. We know that we will continue to have fluctuations in the number of COVID-19 cases within our Hospital, but most public health indicators are trending in the right direction. For this reason, we are moving forward with Phase 2 of our Transition Plan.

For Phase 2, the following response activities will be transitioned over and integrated into our operations as part of our new normal on **Friday, April 21, 2023**:

1. Eye Protection

Our current COVID-19 protocol for eye protection is mandatory eye protection is required only in 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.

What does this mean?

As of April 21, 2023, you will no longer be required to wear eye protection in our Hospital unless required to do so when performing procedures as outlined through IPAC [protocols](#). Any staff member can continue to use eye protection at their preference.

2. Physical Distancing/Spacing

Currently we have physical distancing protocols in place throughout the hospital and all are encouraged to maintain 6 feet of distance from one another when able. Throughout the pandemic, we have had various meeting rooms converted for use as overflow lunchrooms and the cafeteria has decreased capacity with all tables having plexiglass barriers. As well, there has been signage throughout the Hospital indicating minimal distancing (e.g. in waiting rooms and elevators).

What does this mean?

As of April 21, 2023, you will see signage being removed and more traffic within the common areas and cafeteria. The use of overflow lunchrooms will be reverted to meeting rooms and plexiglass dividers will be removed in the cafeteria and Robin's Donuts, as more tables are introduced back into the eating areas. Elevators will allow more than the 2 person max capacity and waiting rooms will be permitted to have more individuals and reverted to pre-pandemic configurations. Unit break rooms may also return to full capacity.

3. COVID-19 Admission Swabs

Throughout the pandemic we have had a medical directive in place that requires testing for every patient upon admission for COVID-19.

What does this mean?

As of April 21, 2023, we will no longer require swabbing for COVID-19 to be done unless ordered by a physician. COVID-19 swabbing at admission will be at the physician's discretion, or if the patient has/develops symptoms upon admission and/or while admitted.

4. Patient and Essential Care Partner (ECP) or Care Partner (CP) Movement

Currently patient and ECP/CP movement throughout the hospital has been discouraged to decrease the traffic within the hospital and lessen the opportunity for COVID-19 to be spread. At times of increased community prevalence and heightened risk, restrictions were enforced to ensure patients and ECPs/CPs only accessed the patient room and were restricted from accessing the cafeteria and Robin's Donuts, etc.

What does this mean?

As of April 21, 2023, any restrictions for patient and ECP/CP movement within the hospital common areas will be lifted. Patients and ECPs/CPs will be allowed to move throughout the hospital as deemed appropriate through their medical care to areas such as the cafeteria, gift shop, Robin's Donuts and other relaxation spaces.

What is NOT changing on April 21, 2023?

- **Masking:** Continues to be mandatory while in our Hospital unless eating or in a private office. This means that all patients, ECPs/CPs, staff and any individual



coming into our Hospital will need to wear a mask. There is no change with this protocol at this time.

- **In-person meetings:** In-person meetings are permitted onsite and should follow masking protocols. Where appropriate, in-person meetings could also include a virtual option to accommodate individuals who are unable to attend onsite.
- **Assessment Centre operations:** There is no change with the services at this time.
- **Hospital access** will continue to be limited through the following:
 - Main Entrance (6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)
 - Emergency Department for designated emergency
 - Labour and Delivery doors for patients/ECPs
 - Renal Doors for Renal patients and CPs (6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.)

All other access points are locked and will require staff to swipe their Hospital ID badge to enter.

What is Next?

Senior Leadership Council will be reviewing Phase 3 of the Transition Plan, which will include masking and re-evaluation of our transition activities to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our community and hospital operations.

Your cooperation throughout this transition is valued and we appreciate your ongoing adaptability to ensure we are meeting the needs of our patients, families and staff.

For any questions regarding these changes, please be sure to ask your Manager.