

MEMO



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

Thunder Bay Regional
Health Research
Institute

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

From: Adam Vinet, VP Patient Experience, Chief Nursing Executive, Regional VP
Regional Cancer Centre

Date: September 8, 2023

RE: Masking and Current State

Our Hospital is currently experiencing an increase in the number of COVID-19 positive patients, and patients with other respiratory illnesses. We are expecting these numbers to climb based on provincial trends and other indicators; especially as children return to school and more inside activities occur. As a precautionary measure to mitigate against the spread of illness within our facility, we would like to remind everyone to diligently practice proper hand hygiene protocols and ensure that you follow proper PPE protocols.

As a reminder, our masking requirements are as follows:

All **staff, professional staff, learners and volunteers** are required to wear at minimum a Level 3 procedure mask where physical distancing standards cannot be maintained, 6 feet or greater. This includes any interaction for anyone, including providing care to patients, where the physical distance is less than 6 feet.

Examples:

a. Masking is required when:

- Conducting an assessment on a patient or providing care
- Transporting a patient to another area of the hospital
- IPAC protocols deem a patient is in isolation which requires masking
- Taking an x-ray or performing occupational/physio therapy

b. Masking is not required when:

- Walking in the hallway (unless accompanying a patient)
- In the cafeteria or Robin's Donuts
- On a clinical unit outside of a patient room and not in direct contact with a patient
- Cleaning or filling supplies and not in direct contact with a patient
- Entering our facilities to come to work

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Essential Care Partners (ECPs) and Care Partners (CPs) are not required to wear a mask when entering the hospital. However, it is important to note that staff are able to require an ECP/CP to wear a mask if they are symptomatic but their presence is essential for a patient, or per IPAC protocols should there be an outbreak and/or based on the condition of the patient they are visiting. We ask that you stress the importance of wearing a mask and proper hand hygiene to ECPs and CPs when able.

Masks will continue to be supplied and made available at all public/staff entrances on the sanitizing stands, as well as at the unit/department level should you or a member of the public require a mask.

Further communication will occur should our Hospital require an increased level of mandatory masking with the continued spread of infection.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping our patients, staff and Hospital safe. If you have any questions then please ask your manager or reach out to IPAC (684-6094) for further details on best practices.

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