

# Coronavirus - Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ is created to answer frequently asked questions about COVID-19. We will update this document regularly based on new questions that will arise. **Newly added questions will be highlighted.**

Please feel free to also reference our [Inpatient Staff Support FAQ](#).

## Holland Bloorview procedures

- [What proactive measures is Holland Bloorview taking to prevent the spread of viruses?](#)
- [What will happen if a client shows symptoms of COVID-19 or we get a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What is the likelihood of our hospital accepting patients with COVID-19 from other hospitals to treat them?](#)
- [What guidance are you providing on meetings at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview doing to increase security of Zoom meetings?](#)
- [How can I get access to Holland Bloorview COVID-19 resources from home if I don't have access to Citrix and VPN?](#)
- [Are there any guidelines/policies regarding wearing gloves during covid-19?](#)
- [Can I request for a hand sanitizer bottle for my work station?](#)
- [I usually park at Bellwoods. Can I come to the main lot?](#)
- [I don't have a parking pass but am coming in regularly to the hospital as a result of redeployment. Can I get a discounted rate for parking?](#)
- [Will you offer free parking for staff working on site or a discount to anyone with an existing parking pass that is no longer coming in/working from home?](#)
- [If we work offsite and can't cancel parking passes can we give our pass to someone who is now working onsite and typically does not?](#)
- [Because of COVID-19, we had to change a lot of what we do rapidly. Is the senior management team thinking about how that will affect our workforce going forward? Will there be changes to our work-from-home policy?](#)
- [Will there ever be a stage in this crisis where layoffs may occur at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [With the reported outbreak at the Jesse Ketchum daycare centre where some of our staffs' children attend, should those staff members self-isolate for 14 days?](#)
- [Is there a possibility that Holland Bloorview staff be redeployed to long-term care homes?](#)
- [What is "contact tracing" and when would it be initiated?](#)

- [How many positive COVID-19 cases should we have before we are declared to be in an outbreak?](#)
- [What does direct care mean?](#)
- [What should I do if I see concerning community activity in our parking lot?](#)
- [How will the new directive for testing in Ontario impact Holland Bloorview? Does that mean that all Holland Bloorview staff should be tested?](#)
- [As many asymptomatic staff members choose to undergo COVID testing, will they be allowed to work until they receive the results?](#)
- [What should we keep in mind when eating outside or going out for a stretch before returning to the building?](#)
- [Can staff or members of the community use the picnic tables at the front of the building to eat lunch or rest?](#)
- [Should the picnic benches be sanitized with CaviWipes after every use? Will environmental staff disinfect these surfaces?](#)

### **Information on policies affecting clients and families**

- [Are we still providing weekend passes for families?](#)
- [Why are staff working in Complex Continuing Care wearing full PPE?](#)
- [Is it possible to increase frequency of cleaning of common surfaces on the inpatient units? Specifically the keyboards, computers, phones, key codes on doors \(equipment room, med room\), as well as the shared kitchen area for families \(fridge, sink etc.\)](#)
- [What is happening with Ambulatory Care programs and services?](#)
- [Can staff and families go to the parking lot or other outside areas of the hospital to get a break?](#)
- [What is the mask policy for family caregivers?](#)
- [What platforms/apps is the organization exploring to provide asynchronous virtual care?](#)

### **Summer programming at Holland Bloorview**

- [What's happening with summer programming at Holland Bloorview?](#)

### **Physical distancing practices**

- [How is Holland Bloorview enforcing physical distancing and what can I do to help?](#)
- [What are ways we can practice physical distancing in smaller, communal spaces \(i.e. atrium stairs, elevators\)?](#)
- [How can we maintain physical distance during therapy sessions?](#)
- [Can we use the outdoor picnic tables?](#)
- [How many people can sit at the same picnic table at once?](#)

### **Students and volunteers**

- [What guidance do you have for volunteers?](#)
- [What guidance do you have for students?](#)

- [When would learners be able to safely restart clinical placements at Holland Bloorview and can we decline a student placement that was offered due to safety concerns? Will future student placements be limited going forward?](#)

### **Bloorview Research Institute**

- [What is happening with the Bloorview Research Institute?](#)
- [I'm running a clinical trial involving kids coming to the hospital receiving therapies that need to be monitored. Are there any considerations?](#)

### **Bloorview School Authority and Kindercirle**

- [What is happening with the Bloorview School Authority and our nursery schools?](#)
- [Do we have child care resources?](#)
- [Should school staff continue to use CaviWipes to clean school equipment even though Cavi Wipes are in high demand/short supply and the equipment haven't been used since March?](#)

### **Screening**

- [Why aren't the staff doing active screening wearing Personal Protective Equipment PPE?](#)
- [How can I sign up for a screening shift?](#)
- [Has there been any direction from public health about updating our screening questions given that a substantial portion of new cases are from community spread?](#)
- [Why aren't temperature checks part of the screening process?](#)
- [Do I need to be re-screened if I leave the hospital for a short break during my shift?](#)

### **HR related questions**

- [What is Holland Bloorview's re-deployment strategy?](#)
- [Are Holland Bloorview staff able to work from home?](#)
- [What about compensation during pandemic?](#)
- [If I am being asked to be quarantined, can I work from home? Will I be paid?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's sick policy?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's policy on health care workers employed in multiple institutions?](#)
- [Can staff request vacation time at this time?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's summer vacation policy?](#)
- [Will the maximum cap on vacation accrual benefit entitlements for staff be extended?](#)
- [With summer vacations coming up, can staff go on vacation out of the province?](#)
- [Will Holland Bloorview implement a temporary pay raise for staff who are not deemed eligible by the government to receive the Pandemic Pay?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's policy on hiring at this time?](#)
- [How can I request an ethics consult during COVID-19?](#)

## **Mask Policy at Holland Bloorview**

- [What is Holland Bloorview's mask policy?](#)
- [What's the difference between level 1 and level 2 procedure masks?](#)
- [How do I use my mask while I am working in client care?](#)
- [What do I do with my mask when I am on break or eating lunch?](#)
- [How long can I use my procedure mask for?](#)
- [Are any programs pausing as a result of our masking policy?](#)
- [Where do I pick up my masks?](#)
- [If I need more than 2 masks where do I get another one from?](#)
- [Why aren't families allowed to use cloth or other reusable masks given the supply shortage reported across the health system ?](#)
- [Why are we placing N95 masks in disposal bins? Why aren't we collecting used procedure masks anymore?](#)
- [Is there an expiry date for N95 masks?](#)
- [How do I handle the procedure mask I get at screening each day?](#)
- [How can I preserve my mask when I leave the hospital if it is not soiled?](#)
- [Is there an optimal way to place the mask in a paper bag?](#)
- [Should I get a new paper bag every day at screening?](#)
- [Can I leave the paper bag with the mask at my desk?](#)
- [What should I do with my mask if it is soiled and cannot be used again?](#)
- [How can I tighten my mask? What are 'ear savers' and where can I get one?](#)
- [What measures are screening staff taking when handling the masks they provide us?](#)
- [Can I take masks home for personal use?](#)
- [Can I wear my reusable procedure mask when taking the transit?](#)
- [Where can I get a cloth mask to use outside of the hospital?](#)
- [Can I keep my mask on until I get to my car?](#)
- [Will Holland Bloorview be able to purchase masks with clear windows so our lips can be seen?](#)
- [Should we be wearing eye protection during clinical care?](#)
- [Do I need to wear goggles when working with a family member and can't maintain 2 meters distance \(i.e. working on completing forms\)?](#)
- [I wear glasses, can I use a face shield instead of goggles when interacting with clients?](#)
- [What if I don't have my own goggles? Where can I access protective eye gear?](#)
- [Can protective eye gear be shared among users?](#)
- [How often should goggles/face shields be cleaned?](#)
- [What can I do to prevent my glasses from fogging while wearing a mask?](#)

## **Staff Wellness**

- [Do staff have access to mental health and wellness resources at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What else is Holland Bloorview doing to support staff at this time?](#)
- [Are there external supports we can use?](#)
- [Is the Gymnasium open for staff use?](#)
- [Will there be any other incentives offered for staff who are working diligently each day?](#)

## **Ways to help**

- [How can I help clients and families at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What should I do if I receive a donation offer/inquiry?](#)
- [I have a heartfelt story that I would like to share. What can I do?](#)
- [How can I help with the Homemade Mask Drive campaign?](#)
- [How can I sign up for a gym supervisor shift?](#)

## **Food Service updates**

- [Why did Tim Hortons' hour of operation change?](#)
- [Why did Sodexo pause all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill?](#)

## **General Health Information**

- [What should I do if I'm feeling sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?](#)
- [What can I do to protect myself from virus spread?](#)
- [I've been increasingly concerned and nervous with taking transit to work as the COVID-19 situation continues to grow and spread. Wondering what I can do to keep myself and those I serve safe.](#)
- [What is the best way to protect myself from COVID-19?](#)
- [What can I do to protect myself and loved ones if a family member in my home is sick?](#)
- [With community spread now happening in Toronto, how do I protect my loved ones at home?](#)
- [Should I keep hand sanitizer in the car?](#)
- [Are there risks of lighting cigarettes after applying hand sanitizer?](#)

## **General information on the COVID-19**

- [What is a coronavirus/ novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)?](#)
- [What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?](#)
- [Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?](#)
- [Is there a vaccine available for this infection?](#)
- [Are there reliable places I can get more information?](#)

- [What's the difference between seasonal coronaviruses and Covid-19?](#)
- [What are the different types of COVID- 19 contact? What do I do in various scenarios?](#)
- [What levels of risk are there for exposure to COVID-19?](#)

## **Holland Bloorview procedures**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What proactive measures is Holland Bloorview taking to prevent the spread of viruses?**

Holland Bloorview's infection prevention and control (IPAC) team is actively monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak, working closely with public health agencies and the Ministry of Health to follow all appropriate guidelines to ensure the safety of our clients, families, volunteers, visitors and staff.

In addition, we have:

- **Began active screening at the door for hospital staff and visitors**
  - As of Monday, March 16, all clients, families, visitors, vendors, staff and volunteers will be screened at the main entrances. We will be asking all entrants a series of questions about their health and travel history. Those that are feeling ill or have travelled outside of Canada will be re-directed.
  - To facilitate this process, all staff, volunteers and students are asked to use the Bloorview School entrance from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. After 7 p.m. you can use the main entrance.
  - During this time, we're asking everyone to exit the building using the door by the pool window on Level 1. The main doors can be used at any time as an accessible exit or for Wheel-Trans pick up or drop off.
  - As of Saturday, March 28, we have updated our masking policy. Please check the 'Holland Bloorview masking policy' section for more information.
  - As a general safety measure, **all staff MUST wear Holland Bloorview ID badge** at all times.
- **Cancelled community programming:** Out of abundance of caution and in line with overall COVID-19 prevention measures, the hospital has cancelled most on-site appointments, services and community programs until further notice.

Note: our pediatric dentistry unit is open for emergency cases only.

### **Please note:**

- For Orthotics and Prosthetics, we are only providing urgent in-person care at this time
- For the Early Concussion Care Clinic, appointments are made by telephone or through Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) only

- All appointments regularly scheduled at the **Eglinton West Satellite Clinic** have been moved to 150 Kilgour Road until further notice.

- **Initiated travel restrictions and self isolation requirements**

- Following a directive from the Ministry of Health, announced March 19, 2020, some healthcare workers who have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days will need to quarantine while others, who have been deemed essential by Holland Bloorview, will be required to report to work wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

If you have travelled out of the country since March 13, assume you will be self-isolating for 14 days, UNLESS you receive a call from your manager to report to duty.

If you have travelled outside of Canada, staff [must fill out this survey](#).

- Employees asked to self-isolate should work from home where possible. Where working from home is not feasible, we will compensate full-time, part-time and contract employees from a designated fund that does not impact departmental budgets.

- **Initiated family and caregiver presence policy restrictions**

For infection control purposes and under Ministry direction, we are reluctantly limiting the number of family caregivers or visitors to one starting tomorrow. This policy applies to both inpatient clients as well as ambulatory appointments and will be in place until further notice. Additional detail:

- As of March 25, all clients will be restricted to **one pre-identified person (family caregiver or visitor) in the building per day (24 hour period), plus one pre-identified back-up who they can alternate days with**. We know that this change will be challenging for families, especially those who rely on their loved ones for support and comfort while away from home. Unfortunately during these unprecedented times, we are being asked to take extraordinary measures to keep our community safe. This decision is consistent with policies rolling out in hospitals across the province. Client and family relations and senior leadership are available for additional support, should you need it.
- For families currently in accommodations, the policy may differ slightly to acknowledge families are already here, have traveled far and maybe without immediate alternative accommodation arrangements. We will work with these families one-on-one as needed. To be consistent with other families, only one visitor will be permitted to visit the inpatient floor per day and all families will be required to comply with our daily screening protocols. The one family caregiver or visitor rule will apply to all families checking into accommodation after March 25.

- **Limited meetings and large gatherings**

- Please cancel all unnecessary meetings or consider using virtual options if the meeting cannot be cancelled or rescheduled to a later date.
- When booking meetings, please book a space large enough to ensure physical distancing of at least 2 meters between each attendee.

Please be advised that visitors will be screened at the door and will be turned away if they are sick or if they've travelled. Please contact all guests in advance so they are aware of this.

**What will happen if a client shows symptoms of COVID-19 or we get a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview?**

In the event that a client exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, we would follow our standard outbreak procedures.

Any client with respiratory symptoms would be placed in contact/droplet precautions OR contact/droplet/airborne precautions if the client was on CCC and needed tracheotomy and ventilation support. Any staff member that would be working with the client will be wearing appropriate PPE. Swabs would be taken and sent for testing to confirm positive or negative for the virus. **Only** staff providing direct care to the client would be allowed in the room and be provided appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure they can continue to provide care safely.

If a client does test positive for COVID-19, infection control would inform key individuals and contact Toronto Public Health. The client would be moved to an isolation room (the client would already be in an isolation room so we wouldn't move after the fact so this can come out) Toronto Public Health would advise us as to whether staff that have been in close contact with the client, or other clients are eligible for testing. All therapies will be cancelled for the client. Should the client's health status warrant it, we may transfer them to SickKids or Sunnybrook, depending on their age.

If a staff member tests positive:

- Occupational Health would contact key individuals including Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Toronto Public Health
- Infection Control would assist with contact tracing for clients who have been in contact with the staff member
- Occupational Health would work with the operations manager to also conduct contact tracing to determine if anyone else came into contact with the staff member
- Staff member would be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days if well enough to stay at home
- Toronto Public Health would advise hospital if staff/clinicians/other clients who had close contact with COVID-positive staff member can be tested

Based on direction from public health, they would declare us to be in an outbreak if we have 2 confirmed positive cases in a patient, staff, or a combination of both.



### **What is the likelihood of our hospital accepting patients with COVID-19 from other hospitals to treat them?**

The system is working hard to create acute bed capacity and so far those efforts are paying off. There is good capacity should we see a surge in cases. At this moment, we don't anticipate Holland Bloorview becoming a centre for COVID 19 patients but is not out of the realm of possibility.

For the moment, Holland Bloorview continues to receive new inpatients from partner hospitals and the community. We are taking all necessary precautions to prevent potential spread of COVID-19, including testing new clients and their families before arriving to Holland Bloorview.

In cases where this can't be done prior to arriving, we will be isolating the client and their designated family members in a private room until we receive results.

Should one of our inpatients test positive for COVID-19, they will remain in isolation and staff who care for that client will be required to wear full PPE when providing care. Should their health status progresses, the client may be transferred to the acute care setting.

### **What guidance are you providing on meetings at Holland Bloorview?**

- Please cancel all unnecessary meetings or consider using virtual options if the meeting cannot be cancelled or rescheduled to a later date.
- When booking meetings, please book a space large enough to ensure physical distancing of at least 2 meters.

Please be advised that visitors will be screened at the door and will be turned away if they are sick or if they've travelled. Please contact all guests in advance so they are aware of this.

### **What is Holland Bloorview doing to increase security of Zoom meetings?**

Cybersecurity is top of mind. We are doing our utmost to protect the privacy of our staff whether they are holding video conferencing meetings or to providing virtual care for clients and their families. To further enhance security of Zoom video conference meetings, we are moving to Zoom for Healthcare.

The benefits of Zoom for Healthcare includes robust security features such as:

- Enhanced security of patient health information and personal information
- Mandatory use of passwords and hosts to activate meetings
- Lock button to be used by host once meeting has started to prevent uninvited participants from joining

Contact Greg Vanden Kroonenberg at [gvandenkroonenberg@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:gvandenkroonenberg@hollandbloorview.ca) if you have more questions or would like to set up a new Zoom account for corporate purposes.

## **How can I get access to Holland Bloorview COVID-19 resources from home if I don't have access to Citrix and VPN?**

In response to the challenges some of you have expressed accessing documents shared in our pandemic communications, we have added a [COVID-19: Resources for Staff](#) page to our website to make sure you can access important resources while working from home if you can't access HBConnect. Integrated into the site is our COVID-19 FAQ, a Mental Health and Wellness resource for staff, and a working from home guideline (among others tools). We will continue to update this page with additional content to support you during this time.

## **Are there any guidelines/policies regarding wearing gloves during covid-19?**

There are three instances when gloves should be worn:

- When staff member may come into contact with bodily fluids during provision of care
- Housekeeping staff should wear gloves when cleaning rooms/emptying garbage cans
- Food services staff handling and serving food

Note: We discourage the use of gloves outside of these circumstances as they have the potential to be a transmitter of virus spread if not used properly.

Always remember to practice good hand hygiene.

## **Can I request for a hand sanitizer bottle for my work station?**

Our hand sanitizing supply is limited to common areas and clinical areas. If you would like to buy your own, we recommend hand sanitizers that are at least 70% alcohol and scent free and bring it with you to work for personal use.

## **I usually park at Bellwood. Can I come to the main lot?**

With fewer cars in our lot, anyone parking at the Bellwood parking lot can park at the main site at no extra cost until June 30 (this policy will be revisited for potential extension at that time). You can collect your temporary pass from reception.

## **I don't have a parking pass but am coming in regularly to the hospital as a result of redeployment. Can I get a discounted rate for parking?**

For staff who do not have a parking pass and wish to drive to Holland Bloorview and park in the Hospital's main lot, monthly passes are now available for purchase at reception for \$40. This is equivalent to the Bellwood monthly parking pass price. This price is valid for your next purchase and does not apply to previously purchased passes.

If you have questions, please contact Jeffrey Chi at [jchi@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:jchi@hollandbloorview.ca).

**Will you offer free parking for staff working on site or a discount to anyone with an existing parking pass that is no longer coming in/working from home?**

Unfortunately, we are not providing parking discounts or free parking for existing parking pass holders. Many financial factors come into play including the cancellation of many revenue-generating programs at the hospital and a substantial investment in technology (increasing virtual private network (VPN) and Citrix access ) that allows people to work from home. As well, administration of parking deductions/adjustments would generate additional workload for teams that are already at capacity during the pandemic. It is worth noting that we have one of the lowest parking rates (perhaps the lowest) for Toronto-area hospitals.

Additionally, Holland Bloorview continues to be obligated to pay its regular monthly rent to CAMH, the property owner of the Bellwood lot and operate and maintain the Kilgour lot in normal fashion, irrespective of the number of current users.

Thanks for your understanding of the many considerations that factor into this decision.

**If we work offsite and can't cancel parking passes can we give our pass to someone who is now working onsite and typically does not?**

While this practice is normally not allowed, an exception is granted for the period up to June 30, after which we will reassess. Employees are responsible for the safe return of loaned passes.

**Because of COVID-19, we had to change a lot of what we do rapidly. Is the senior management team thinking about how that will affect our workforce going forward? Will there be changes to our work-from-home policy?**

This is an important discussion to be had with the senior management team over the coming weeks. Tremendous amount of work has taken place by our IT department enabling a large majority of employees to work from home, allowing us to be productive and continue to provide the same great care to our clients and families. While nothing will replace the face-to-face interactions with our clients, the pandemic has opened up new ways for all of us to work together while still supporting each other and our clients and families. Updates and results of this discussion will be provided to you when available.

**Will there ever be a stage in this crisis where layoffs may occur at Holland Bloorview?**

While we can't predict what the future may hold, at this time we are not planning to lay off any employees. For many departments it has been business as usual and that the normal accountabilities and responsibilities have been continuing. We also have many clinical employees providing virtual care to our clients and families, many have been redeployed to our inpatient team and others who have been assisting departments on the delivery of projects and programs. We are so grateful that everyone is doing their best to adjust to this new way of working.

**With the reported outbreak at the Jesse Ketchum daycare centre where some of our staffs' children attend, should those staff members self-isolate for 14 days?**

If your child attended the Jesse Ketchum daycare centre and you don't know if you should self-isolate or come to work, please speak to Occupational Health as they are the source of the best expert advice and the latest advice. The team supports the right decision consistent with screening and what we're expected to do in order to keep everyone at Holland Bloorview safe.

**Is there a possibility that Holland Bloorview staff be redeployed to long-term care homes?**

As a children's hospital, we have not been asked to support the plan of long-term care homes redeployment, nor has SickKids. For now, the adult and acute care hospitals have the bandwidth that is needed to support long-term care and retirement homes. We don't anticipate that our staff will be redeployed to work in long-term care, but we will keep an eye on any developments in this realm.

**What is "contact tracing" and when would it be initiated?**

Contact tracing refers to determining who has been in contact with a COVID -19 positive person. At Holland Bloorview, contact tracing would be initiated once occupational health and/or infection control knows of a confirmed COVID-19 positive staff/patient/family caregiver.

While keeping the affected individuals' confidentiality/privacy, staff who have been in direct contact (i.e. not wearing appropriate PPE, were standing closer than 2 meters of the individual for longer than 15 minutes, had contact with bodily fluid/droplets, etc.) will be contacted by occupational health to be informed on next steps, including testing.

Part of contact tracing is determining where the individual was in the facility **48 hours** prior to the onset of symptoms. This can be the challenging part of contact tracing. However, if we have a client that is in isolation, we have a log sheet outside the client's room that will help us identify staff and caregivers who may have had contact with the client.

**How many positive COVID-19 cases should we have before we are declared to be in an outbreak?**

Based on Ontario Public Health directives, we fall under the public acute care guidelines which state that a hospital will need to have 2 confirmed positive cases in a patient, staff, or a combination of both to be declared in an outbreak.

**What does direct care mean?**

Direct care is care that is being performed on a client where you are unable to maintain 2 meters (6 feet) of physical distance. This may include nursing procedures, therapy sessions, recreation activities etc.

**What should I do if I see concerning community activity in our parking lot?**

If you witness community activity in the parking lot that poses safety issues (i.e. too many community

members gathered at once, physical distancing rules not respected, family members meeting outside of the exit only doors or visiting by the fence), please contact security at ext. 6101.

**How will the [new directive](#) for testing in Ontario impact Holland Bloorview? Does that mean that all Holland Bloorview staff should be tested?**

We are still in the process of reviewing the Premier's guidance on testing and what that would mean for Holland Bloorview. We do not have the capacity to do mass staff testing on site. However, if staff members are asymptomatic and wish to get tested, then that is their prerogative. Positive test results would then need to be disclosed immediately to Occupational Health only. The staff member is also required to inform their manager that they will be absent from work due to illness. They are not obligated to share results test results with their manager. Occupational Health will only release the name of someone with a positive test to their manager with the employee's permission and if contact tracing is required.

**As many asymptomatic staff members choose to undergo COVID testing, will they be allowed to work until they receive the results?**

Asymptomatic staff who choose to get tested for COVID-19 can still come to work while waiting for the results. If your test comes back positive, you will need to inform Occupational Health and you will be required to self-isolate. Furthermore, Occupational Health and the IPAC team will look at different risk factors to further assess the situation (i.e. where was the individual within the past 48 hours, was she/he wearing appropriate PPE at all times, did she/he follow physical distancing rules etc.)

**What should we keep in mind when eating outside or going out for a stretch before returning to the building?**

- If eating at the picnic tables, physical distancing still applies
- A limit of two people per table is required, seated diagonally from one another
- Masks need to be placed on a clean surface, not directly on the table
- Bring a small, travel-size hand sanitizer with you so you can sanitize your hands before removing your mask, and again after applying the mask when you are done eating
- If you leave the building to go out for a walk, wear a non-medical mask, especially if you cannot keep physical distance from others
- Upon return to the building after a short break re-screening is required

**Can staff or members of the community use the picnic tables at the front of the building to eat lunch or rest?**

No. The two picnic tables at the front of the building are reserved for families to have a window visit with their loved ones. These visits are being scheduled and should be left vacant as they may be booked.

**Should the picnic benches be sanitized with CaviWipes after every use? Will environmental staff disinfect these surfaces?**

Picnic tables and the tables in the cafeteria are not cleaned between staff use. The tables in the cafeteria

are cleaned daily by environmental services. If there are spills, or if the picnic tables are sticky, environmental services can be called to clean the picnic table by request only.

## **Information on policies affecting clients and families**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **Are we still providing weekend passes for families?**

In accordance with Ministry guidelines, we've made the tough decision to pause weekend passes as of March 27. The team has worked on a staffing model to ensure proper coverage and safety and provision of therapy on weekends and therapeutic recreation opportunities.

### **Why are staff working in Complex Continuing Care wearing full PPE?**

To protect our most vulnerable clients, we are making changes to our infection control practices in Complex Continuing Care (CCC).

As of April 8 all staff members providing care/treatment/recreation therapy in the **CCC close observation rooms** (i.e. 4-bed rooms), with tracheostomies and/or ventilated clients are required to wear full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (mask, goggles/face shield, gowns and gloves).

While not directly linked to COVID-19, this infection prevention and control measure is being made as a result of the aerosols that are released from the ventilators, along with some of the procedures that are carried out with our clients, like humidified air or cough assist. Staff on the CCC unit provide care to multiple clients and this measure is being taken as a precautionary infection prevention and control measure. Families in the CCC unit are not required to wear full PPE.

When finished providing care/treatment/recreation therapy, please remove all PPE except your mask. Please remember to practice good infection control practices on removal.

If you have questions, please talk to your manager.

### **Is it possible to increase frequency of cleaning of common surfaces on the inpatient units? Specifically the keyboards, computers, phones, key codes on doors (equipment room, med room), as well as the shared kitchen area for families (fridge, sink etc.)**

Since start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have increased cleaning/disinfection of key touch points. Extra labour and supplies have been added for this purpose and the extra cleaning has been ongoing. Units have Cavi Wipes for any additional cleaning they feel is required for personal spaces/touch areas.

### **What is happening with Ambulatory Care programs and services?**

With input from programs, decisions have been made to ramp down ambulatory programs and move to alternative means to support our clients and families where possible, such as phone or virtual care.

In a very exciting development, a new directive has been developed that opens up new options for

virtual care. Under this directive, subject to consent properly documented in Meditech Expanse, staff will be able to use email to communicate with clients/families and use telephone or videoconferencing for virtual visits. So, in addition to Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), staff will be able to use Zoom, WhatsApp, and Skype to increase access to our services.

Our management team has reviewed each individual ambulatory program to assess how and/or if we can continue to meet the needs of clients in each program through these alternative means. We have outlined the current status of each program and services [here](#).

Please note as part of this, we have paused access to the Ronald McDonald Playroom until further notice, effective March 18, 2020.

Decisions related to consultant clinics are forthcoming.

### **Can staff and families go to the parking lot or other outside areas of the hospital to get a break?**

Currently, weekend passes (leave of absence) are paused until further notice in order to keep our community safe from possible spread of the virus. Please note that meeting family members/visitors with clients in the hospital parking lot and other areas outside the front entrance of the hospital is considered a leave of absence, and such gatherings are not allowed at this time. Clients and family caregivers can access our Spiral Garden and third floor terrace to enjoy fresh air.

### **What is the mask policy for family caregivers?**

To align with the updated mask policy for staff at Holland Bloorview, we also made the decision to revise our mask policy for family caregivers. The changes were made for both families and staff as an additional precaution to protect our community from possible spread of the virus.

Starting May 8, all family caregivers are expected to wear a mask at all times where physical distancing of at least 2 meters (six feet) is not possible.

To make it clearer for our teams on when family caregivers can and can't remove their masks, here are a few scenarios:

#### **Scenarios where you may notice the changes**

- Family caregivers wearing a mask in their loved one's room, especially if in a shared room when physical distancing cannot be maintained with other clients or family caregivers
- Family caregivers wearing a mask when members of the care team come into the room
- Families and all staff (not just clinical) wearing masks in common spaces like the elevators, stairs, hallways.

#### **Scenarios where removing the mask may be possible for family caregivers if physically distanced from others by 2 meters:**

- Inpatient room (i.e. when eating or sleeping)



- Family lounges on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- Cafeteria
- Reflection Room
- Bathroom
- Outside (i.e. Spiral Garden, outdoor terraces on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

Physical distancing is not required between family caregivers and their loved one unless if/when they are receiving aerosol generating medical procedures.

### **What platforms/apps is the organization exploring to provide asynchronous virtual care?**

We are currently investigating cloud-based file sharing solutions that would allow clinicians and clients to securely share files and videos that have been identified as a specific need. Information Systems understands the importance of virtual care so we are prioritizing this work.

There are significant privacy and security concerns related to sharing personal health information (PHI) and personally identifiable information (PII) in the cloud so due diligence needs to be done before we move forward.

## **Summer programming at Holland Bloorview**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What's happening with summer programming at Holland Bloorview?**

We have begun evaluating how and whether we can accommodate the number of programs we typically offer to children and youth during the summer months.

As part of this assessment, we have made the difficult decision to cancel some of our summer program offerings for a number of safety reasons including the inability to ensure physical distancing of participants, challenges around masking protocols, and the reduced number of volunteers because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Confirmed summer 2020 sessions cancelled to date include:

- Spiral Garden summer camp
- The Independence Program – 3 week overnight residential program
- Turning Point – 1 week overnight program
- Camp Connection – 4 day overnight program

In addition to the above, we are assessing the feasibility and interest of conducting some of our programs (or aspects of them) virtually, including Spiral Garden activities. We are also assessing whether we can host smaller groups for the Spiral Garden summer camp.

We know that this will be very hard for many clients and families who have been looking forward to participating in these programs. A survey is going to be distributed in the coming weeks to our clients and families to assess the interest in virtual learning, coaching and workshops. We know that our



programs are critical in supporting our clients achieve their goals and are disappointed that we cannot run them this summer.

Our assessment is ongoing and we will continue to communicate our decisions once they have been made.

## **Physical distancing practices**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **How is Holland Bloorview enforcing physical distancing and what can I do to help?**

Physical distancing which refers to keeping physical distance is a key measure to fight the spread of COVID-19. Here are the measures we've taken to support physical distancing at Holland Bloorview:

- Active screening with line ups that support physical distancing
- Enhanced signage around the hospital to promote physical distance of at least 2 meters
- Reduced in-hospital staffing and increased work-at-home capability
- On March 25, we closed the staff workout gym. Payroll deductions for this service are paused until further notice.
- On March 25, we paused all staff gatherings in the gymnasium below the school. This includes ball hockey and basketball.
- With reduced traffic in the hospital, many work stations are free. Please ask your manager about using someone else's workspace if you find you are in close quarters with colleagues.

Here are a few things you can do:

- As some essential in-person meetings are still necessary, please make sure that the room booked allows for adequate distancing between attendees (2 meters). If you cannot keep this distance between every person, your meeting should be moved to a bigger space or people should be asked to join the meeting by phone.
- If you're standing in line in the cafeteria/Tim Hortons, make sure you keep adequate distance (at least 2 meters) between you and the person in front of you.
- If you're having lunch with your colleagues in the cafeteria or anywhere else in the building, please make sure you leave at least an empty chair between you and the next person sitting next to you.

Continue to find creative ways to stay connected while keeping your distance (i.e. phone calls, email, Skype, Zoom, Facetime to name a few.)

### **What are ways we can practice physical distancing in smaller, communal spaces (i.e. atrium stairs, elevators)?**

We have kept the atrium stairs open, as it is a frequently used and key access point to the second floor.

We ask staff to maintain physical distancing wherever possible, even in smaller communal spaces such as the stairs and elevators. People can wait until the stairs are clear or take the next available elevator.

We are actively looking at an elevator limit. In the meantime, please use your best judgement when using these spaces and accessing the elevator, carefully maintaining a 2 meter physical distance.

### **How can we maintain physical distance during therapy sessions?**

A key factor is to look at the size of the room to ensure proper physical distancing. With more empty spaces, more options are available to run programs.

For staff: because of the nature of our work, it may be challenging or in some cases, impossible, to maintain proper physical distancing with patients while providing care and conducting therapy sessions. This is why we are requiring all staff who interact with our clients to wear appropriate PPE.

We are also offering virtual therapy as an option as well if appropriate.

As always, we encourage staff to practice good hand hygiene, avoid touching their face as much as possible to prevent potential virus exposure.

### **Can we use the outdoor picnic tables?**

The outdoor picnic tables, accessible through the door in the cafeteria, are ready for use by staff, clients and families.

Please remember:

- Physical distancing rules still apply outdoors when using picnic tables. Our Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) team recommends only 2 people per table at a time sitting on opposite ends to maintain 2 meters of distance.
- Do not re-position the tables. Tables are strategically placed to maintain safe distance between them.
- Smoking and vaping is not allowed on hospital grounds

As the weather gets warmer, we want our staff, clients and families to enjoy the fresh air. However, we ask that we all work together to ensure that rules followed inside of the hospital are also followed when on the hospital grounds outdoors.

### **How many people can sit at the same picnic table at once?**

We ask that only two people are seated at a picnic table at a time. Individuals should be sitting on diagonally opposite ends to maintain at least 2 meters of physical distancing.

## **Students and volunteers**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What guidance do you have for volunteers?**

Volunteers are one of our most valuable assets. Their support of our incredible programs and services is

truly priceless.

Having said that, in line with other recent initiatives to reduce person-to-person interaction, we have paused all volunteer activities starting on March 26. The team is looking for ways to staff programs normally supported by volunteers.

We are so grateful to our volunteers and look forward to when we can enjoy working with them again!

### **What guidance do you have for students?**

The Teaching and Learning Institute is communicating with all students regarding COVID-19. Updates and information are being shared via email.

**As of Monday, March 16, all unpaid student placements in clinical areas (i.e. nursing, health discipline and medical office administration students) were paused.**

### **Incoming Students:**

For any students scheduled to begin on Monday, March 16, schools were contacted and asked to relay this information to students.

### **Current Students:**

For any students already registered, students were asked to pick up/remove personal effects and complete any urgent only last minute items by end of business day Monday March 16. Students will continue to have access to their hospital email while this pause is in effect.

### **Next Steps:**

This pause in placements will be in effect at least until July 6. We will continue to discuss the ability to bring students back into the clinical environment closer that date. This pause is in line with other TAHSN hospitals.

In the event that you receive a question from a student please contact Kim Jones Galley at ext. 3645 or at [kgalley@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:kgalley@hollandbloorview.ca) for additional information.

**When would learners be able to safely restart clinical placements at Holland Bloorview and can we decline a student placement that was offered due to safety concerns? Will future student placements be limited going forward?**

Based on the planning happening at the Toronto Academic Health Science Network in collaboration with the University of Toronto, the earliest that learners would come back into the hospitals would be July and that, like all our recovery planning, will depend on many processes we will be putting in place (i.e. availability of PPE so we ensure that we're keeping our learners safe).

Stay tuned for more information on this.

**Bloorview Research Institute**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

## **What is happening with the Bloorview Research Institute?**

All communications related to changes in work-flow will be communicated directly by Dr. Tom Chau and Mani Kang going forward. If you have any questions, please reach out to Mani Kang directly. Note that due to the nature of work conducted within the institute, practices may differ slightly from the hospital.

## **I'm running a clinical trial involving kids coming to the hospital receiving therapies that need to be monitored. Are there any considerations?**

Clinical trials can continue subject to the new screening measures. Depending on health and travel history, some visitors to Holland Bloorview will be asked to return home.

## **Bloorview School Authority and Kindercircle**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

## **What is happening with the Bloorview School Authority and our nursery schools?**

As announced by the provincial government, all publicly funded Ontario schools and nursery schools, will be closed from March 14 until further notice. This includes Bloorview School Authority and Holland Bloorview-run nursery schools. This decision was based on advice from Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the experts at the provincial COVID-19 Command Table. This is an important public health measure to help slow down the spread of COVID-19 in our province. We recognize that it will be a significant hardship on families.

Holland Bloorview must continue to deliver vital healthcare services despite any school closures. We will continue to provide safe, high quality patient care and we depend on all of you to make this happen. We understand that these changes are very difficult for families with school aged children; however, we need all our team members to report to work as scheduled.

## **Do we have child care resources?**

To help assist healthcare professionals with child care, the City of Toronto is now providing emergency child care for children (from birth to age 12) of essential and critical service workers.

The 24/7 service will be provided to families at no cost and will be located across Toronto in existing city-run licensed child care facilities and staffed by City of Toronto child care workers.

For more information on eligibility and how to apply, [click here](#).

## **Should school staff continue to use CaviWipes to clean school equipment even though Cavi Wipes are in high demand/short supply and the equipment haven't been used since March?**

Yes. Please use CaviWipes to clean the school equipment even though they haven't been used since March.

## **Screening**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **Why aren't the staff doing active screening wearing Personal Protective Equipment PPE?**

Our active screening booths have been set up purposefully to allow our screeners to perform their duties without the need of PPE. The tables for staff screening allow appropriate physical distance and new Plexiglas windows have been set up for staff screening clients and families which provides the appropriate barrier to ensure their safety.

### **How can I sign up for a screening shift?**

If you are volunteering or being redeployed to screen you can now sign-up online with PickATime. The PickATime system is accessible from home and will allow staff to log in and book a shift that is convenient for their schedule. The system will then generate automatic confirmation emails and reminder emails 24 hours before shifts start. Text message reminders are also enabled for users who enter their cellphone numbers.

To get more information on how you can sign up for a shift, go to our [COVID-19: Resources for Staff page](#) and look under 'Sign up for a screening shift'.

### **Has there been any direction from public health about updating our screening questions given that a substantial portion of new cases are from community spread?**

Our Infection Prevention and Control team reviews provincial guidance and the practices of our healthcare partners, factoring in Holland Bloorview needs/risks, on a daily basis and adjusts our screening questions accordingly.

For that reason, please listen to the questions carefully because they do change on almost a daily basis.

### **Why aren't temperature checks part of the screening process?**

We are following the guidelines issued by our medical experts at the local, provincial and federal levels when developing and revising our screening procedures. Currently the guidelines are not recommending that hospitals to do temperature checks as part of their screening process. Should this change, we will update our screening procedures accordingly.

### **Do I need to be re-screened if I leave the hospital for a short break during my shift?**

Yes. Screening is mandatory upon every entry to the hospital if you leave the hospital grounds. Even if it was just for a short period of time. Please cooperate with our screeners who are an essential part of our Holland Bloorview community and a key line of defense against the virus.

## **HR related questions**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What is Holland Bloorview's re-deployment strategy?**

In health emergencies such as the current pandemic, it is not unusual for members of health care teams to be asked to participate in activities that are outside of their normal duties. At Holland Bloorview, we are taking a systematic approach to determining our re-deployment strategy, with planning that is designed to ensure the needs of our inpatients, who continue to require 24/7 care.

This includes assessing the many dimensions of care we provide and cataloguing the transferable skills we have to determine where redeployment is possible. All staff re-deployed will receive the necessary training (including Meditech if required), before beginning their duties. No-one will be put in a position where they can't succeed or can't ensure safety for them or the children they are serving.

We have launched the [Redeployment Centre](#) on HBCConnect in order to connect areas in need of support to staff available for redeployment.

For more information, please visit [this page](#) or send an email to [redeployment@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:redeployment@hollandbloorview.ca).

Our ultimate goal is to sustain the safe operations of our hospital in service to our clients.

### **Are Holland Bloorview staff able to work from home?**

We have made significant progress identifying staff that can do their work from home since sharing guidelines for [working from home](#).

Technology remains a big piece in moving this forward and we are actively increasing Citrix and virtual private network (VPN) licences to support our remote worker needs. Managers can use their discretion to allow their team members to work from home if they can do so effectively and are already equipped with the technology they need.

Please know that working from home is not a final destination. You may be called back at any time or be redeployed to help in other areas of the hospital and potentially outside of your regular work hours (such as evenings and weekends).

we know that some have expressed concern about coming in at all. As a hospital providing essential service, we need to perform our duty as healthcare workers, clinical and non-clinical alike, even under the stressful conditions we see today. If you choose to take time off, you'll need to discuss with your manager whether you will use vacation time or unpaid leave.

### **What about compensation during pandemic?**

As we work to reduce the number of staff reporting into the hospital to do our part to 'flatten The curve',

we want to reassure you that Holland Bloorview will continue to compensate staff with their regular wage if they are being asked to work from home or are being redeployed.

Some pandemic practices will differ for BRI. If you have any questions about compensation or funding related to your research, please contact Mani Kang ([mkang@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:mkang@hollandbloorview.ca)) or Dr. Tom Chau ([tchau@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:tchau@hollandbloorview.ca)).

### **If I am being asked to be quarantined, can I work from home? Will I be paid?**

Where possible, quarantined staff should check with their manager and make arrangements to work from home. Where this is not feasible, we will compensate fulltime, part-time and contract employees from a designated fund that does not impact departmental budgets.

### **What is Holland Bloorview's sick policy?**

Please review [Holland Bloorview's sick policy on HB connect](#).

### **What is Holland Bloorview's policy on health care workers employed in multiple institutions?**

Staff that also work at another hospital, on a unit where a COVID outbreak is taking place, should not attend work at Holland Bloorview. This is the same protocol we follow for staff working at other hospitals where an influenza outbreak is in place. Note, if the team member worked at a hospital that had an outbreak, but they did not work on the affected unit, then they can continue to work at Holland Bloorview.

The only exception to this policy is for respiratory therapists that also work outside of Holland Bloorview in an ICU or in a COVID-19 outbreak unit. They can report to work as long as they have no symptoms of COVID-19. This policy supports meeting the needs of our clients, ensuring we have proper staffing during all shifts, and follows all provincial guidelines.

If you have any questions about this, please speak to your manager.

### **Can staff request vacation time at this time?**

To support the health and well-being of our staff during this challenging time, we have revised our guidance from March 27 that restricted vacation requests until the end of April.

Effective May 1 – 31, 2020, staff can take up to 2 consecutive vacation days upon approval.

### **How does it work?**

- Vacation requests must be submitted to your manager at least 7 days in advance
- Managers will then send the vacation request to their respective vice presidents for review and approval
- All vacation requests received from nursing (e.g. RNs, RPNs, NPs) should be provided to the direct manager and the chief nursing executive Marilyn Ballantyne for review and approval
- In the event of staffing shortages and/or redeployment requirements, the planned vacation days may be cancelled at management's discretion.

If you have questions or would like to request a day off, please speak to your manager.

### **What is Holland Bloorview's summer vacation policy?**

Here is direction for vacation requests for the period of June 1 to August 31 (no change to previous guidance regarding now to May 31). Here's what you need to know:

- All vacation requests between June and August 31 should be forwarded to your manager by May 15, 2020 for consideration and planning purposes.
- Managers will then forward the request to their respective vice presidents for review and approval. **In addition** all requests received from nursing (i.e RNs, RPNs, NPs) should be provided to the chief nursing executive.
- Approved vacation requests will be confirmed by May 31, 2020.
- **A maximum of 5 consecutive days** may be requested (exceptional circumstances will be considered, but will not exceed 10 consecutive days) each month from June through August 31.
- In the event of staffing shortages and/or redeployment requirements, planned vacation days may unfortunately need to be cancelled/rescheduled at management's discretion.

If you have questions or would like to book your summer vacation, please speak to your manager.

### **Will the maximum cap on vacation accrual benefit entitlements for staff be extended?**

Yes, the temporary removal of the maximum cap on vacation entitlements will be extended to August 31, 2020

### **With summer vacations coming up, can staff go on vacation out of the province?**

If you are planning on visiting another province for your summer vacation, then you should be prepared to be asked to go back home and self-isolate at screening. We're hoping to get clearer guidance on this from Ontario Health in the coming weeks.

### **Will Holland Bloorview implement a temporary pay raise for staff who are not deemed eligible by the government to receive the Pandemic Pay?**

Unfortunately, we do not have the funding or excess in our budget to be able to support a temporary pay raise.

Despite valiant efforts by Ontario Health, the Ontario Hospital Association and our Toronto Academic Health Science Network partners advocating for pandemic pay for all healthcare workers, we were disappointed to learn that no additional changes would be made to the eligibility list.

### **What is Holland Bloorview's policy on hiring at this time?**

Some have asked if we can continue to hire staff. The answer is yes! We have no restrictions on hiring at the moment. However, if you have any questions or concerns that may impact your decision, please



speak to your manager. Again these procedures may be different in the BRI.

### **How can I request an ethics consult during COVID-19?**

Staff may continue to request consults for themselves or on behalf of their team from our Ethics Service, by directly emailing Dolly Menna-Dack. There are also ethics resources on HB Connect under the Ethics Department Hub.

## **Mask Policy at Holland Bloorview**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What is Holland Bloorview's mask policy?**

In response to the emerging evidence of asymptomatic virus transmission and an increase in COVID-19 outbreaks at many hospitals across Ontario, we have made the decision to revise our mask policy. Starting Wednesday, May 6, all staff will be provided with a procedure mask at screening every morning. You will be provided with one or two masks for the day depending on the work you do.

**Staff are expected to wear a mask at all times where physical distancing of at least 2 meters (six feet) is not achievable.**

This includes:

- All care and therapy areas throughout the building
- In common areas like stairs, elevators, hallways
- In shared offices where physical distancing is not achievable

Note, physical distancing of at least 2 meters (six feet) is mandatory before your mask can be removed. Some common scenarios where removing the mask may be possible: staff respite rooms, lunch rooms and cafeteria, meeting rooms, outside (i.e. Spiral Garden), when a physical barrier is available (i.e. screening desks, The Garden Grill cash desks, etc.)

For tips on how to properly don and doff a procedure mask and how to correctly place a mask on a clean surface when taking a break, [check out this video](#) or [this poster](#).

For information on mask policy for family caregivers, [click here](#).

### **What's the difference between level 1 and level 2 procedure masks?**

Level 1 masks are used for short procedures and exams that don't involve aerosols, sprays of fluids or when no direct care is being performed.

Level 2 masks are for procedure involving low to moderate levels of aerosols, sprays and/or fluids. Or when normal direct care procedures are being performed

### **How do I use my mask while I am working in client care?**

- The mask is to be worn continuously on the unit, without removing the mask between patient encounters
- If assessing a client who is on droplet/contact precautions – don additional personal protective equipment (PPE) such as a gown, eye protection and gloves -- when going into the room and leave the same procedure mask on.
- When exiting the room remove gown, gloves and eye protection and perform hand hygiene. The procedure mask does not need to be changed unless soiled, damaged, or very moist.
- Please dispose of masks in a sanitary manner when you are no longer using them and kindly remind people who might not be familiar with mask use that they must be disposed of safely.

#### **What do I do with my mask when I am on break or eating lunch?**

- You can remove your procedure mask during breaks and while eating lunch.
- To remove the mask:
  - Perform hand hygiene – wash your hands or use hand sanitizer
  - Remove the mask using the ear loops only
  - Place the mask on a clean surface with the inner mask facing upwards to avoid contamination (white side facing up)
  - Perform hand hygiene (hand washing or sanitizer) before re-applying your mask
- Once your break is done: Perform hand hygiene and reapply your mask

\*\*\*Please note –Inpatient Nursing Unit Report Rooms are considered a patient area, therefore masks cannot be removed in these area. Eating is not permitted in these rooms\*\*\*

#### **How long can I use my procedure mask for?**

You should change your mask if it becomes visibly soiled, very moist or damaged.

#### **Are any programs pausing as a result of our masking policy?**

Yes, all aquatic programming is paused until further notice. This includes therapeutic and recreational swim.

#### **Where do I pick up my masks?**

The masks will be distributed at screening desks for staff and family/caregivers.

#### **If I need more than 2 masks where do I get another one from?**

If you require an additional mask please ask your operations managers during business hours. After hours please ask the hospital charge nurse.

#### **Why aren't families allowed to use cloth or other reusable masks given the supply shortage reported across the health system ?**

Homemade masks are not medical devices and have not been tested to recognized standards. These types of masks may not be useful in blocking virus particles that may be spread by coughing or sneezing and can possibly put the user at risk of catching the virus because of possible loose fit or inadequate material.

### **Why are we placing N95 masks in disposal bins? Why aren't we collecting used procedure masks anymore?**

As we face personal protective equipment (PPE) shortage resulting from increased demand during the COVID-19 pandemic and following guidance from the Ontario Health, we are taking proactive steps to preserve and conserve our supply N95 respirators. This is a systemic issue faced by hospitals across the country.

Ontario health has sent out new guidance on PPE conservation. Two key pieces are relevant for us at Holland Bloorview:

- **N95 masks:** Ontario Health continues to look for ways to conserve and re-process N95 masks safely and effectively. We'll continue to collect N95s and await direction on sterilization and re-processing of masks. **You can deposit your used N95 in one of bins located on the third floor on each unit and on the fifth floor near the exit to accommodations.** Collected masks will only be redeployed after a process to sanitize them has been established by Ontario Health.
- **Procedure mask:** Ontario Health has concluded that there are limited possibilities for effective reprocessing of procedure masks. **As a result, we will no longer collect used procedure masks upon exit from our building starting Wednesday, May 13.**

### **For N95 masks:**

1. When finished with the N95 mask, place it in a specially marked linen hamper. Only masks that intact and unsoiled (e.g. free from lipstick and makeup smudges) should be placed in the bin.
2. Masks will be collected by environmental services staff who will be wearing appropriate PPE and placed in cold storage until the means for reprocessing are identified. **Used masks will not be distributed to staff or families before they've gone through a proper method of reprocessing.**

As noted above, part of our conservation efforts includes extending the life of PPE as long as possible. Depending on your level of interaction with clients or general use of the mask, one mask may be suitable to wear for more than one shift. We ask that if one of your masks is suitable to be worn for more than one shift or you have only used one of the two masks provided to you in a day, please re-use and let your screener know that you do not require a new mask at the beginning of your next shift. Additional masks can be acquired from your HCN during your shift should your mask become soiled.

The preservation of PPE is critically important to our sector and necessary to protect ourselves and our clients and families. Ontario Health is actively working with partners to determine the best approach to implement conservation methods. In the meantime, your efforts to help us preserve our supply are much appreciated and an important part to keeping us all safe.

### **Is there an expiry date for N95 masks?**

Yes. N95 masks expire every 5 years.

### **How do I handle the procedure mask I get at screening each day?**

1. Pick up your mask at screening. Be sure to pick up a paper bag as well. Put on your mask while at screening before going to your workspace.
2. When you leave for the day, wear your mask to the exit door by the pool. Clean your hands thoroughly at the hand sanitizer station by the exit.
3. If your mask is clean, place it in the paper bag you got earlier that morning. Facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself. You can wear it again the next time you are at work.
4. If your mask is very moist, soiled or damaged, throw out your mask in the garbage bin near the exit door and get a new one the next time you come in.

### **How can I preserve my mask when I leave the hospital if it is not soiled?**

If your mask is not soiled, wet or damaged, best evidence suggests storing it in a paper bag. To support preservation efforts, paper bags are being distributed at the screening booths.

When returning to the hospital, don it when you return following appropriate hand hygiene practices and only take the masks that you need at screening. [This video](#) has been created by our team to showcase proper donning and doffing techniques.

### **Is there an optimal way to place the mask in a paper bag?**

Yes. To store your facemask safely and avoid potentially contaminating the paper bag, fold the mask so that inside of the mask (white side) is facing out when you place it in the bag.

### **Should I get a new paper bag every day at screening?**

You can reuse the same bag multiple times given that you store your mask properly by folding it so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. When the outer surface of the mask touches the inside of the paper bag, you will need to use a new bag.

### **Can I leave the paper bag with the mask at my desk?**

You can't leave your mask and paper bag at your desk as the mask should be taken off at the exit door.

### **What should I do with my mask if it is soiled and cannot be used again?**

If your mask is visibly soiled (i.e. is marked with makeup), please place in the garbage bin near the exit door as you leave the hospital.

### **How can I tighten my mask? What are 'ear savers' and where can I get one?**

To tighten your mask you can use 'ear savers', a device that helps ensure the mask fits better on your face if it's loose and protect the ears from getting sore if you wear your mask for long periods. Some ear

savers are made out of headbands while others are plastic, made out of 3D printing. We have a limited supply of ear savers at our screening stations.

### **What measures are screening staff taking when handling the masks they provide us?**

According to the new protocol put in place the week of April 6, two types of masks are now located outside the plexiglass where the screening staff sit.

Once staff are screened, they are instructed by screening staff to sanitize their hands first, and then pick up their mask by lifting it out of the box by the ear loop.

### **Can I take masks home for personal use?**

No, we need to ensure that we have enough supply for staff here at the hospital who require the use of N95 respirators. There are no directives indicating the use of masks outside of a hospital setting

### **Can I wear my reusable procedure mask when taking the transit?**

We encourage the use of the procedure masks to be worn at Holland Bloorview only for providing protection to our staff, clients and families. In the community (i.e. in transit or at grocery stores) we encourage the use of the non-medical cloth masks.

If staff members wear the procedure masks given to them at the beginning of their shift when taking transit, that mask should not be reused for a second shift at the hospital even if it's still in good shape. By wearing your procedure mask out in the community, you're exposing the outside of the mask to a greater risk of virus exposure as not everyone outside of Holland Bloorview will be wearing a mask.

### **Where can I get a cloth mask to use outside of the hospital?**

You can get a cloth mask at reception courtesy of community donations [from our mask drive](#).

### **Can I keep my mask on until I get to my car?**

Yes, as long as you sanitize your hands before and after placing your mask in the paper bag properly. If you want to dispose of your mask after you get in the car, you can deposit in a garbage bin.

### **Will Holland Bloorview be able to purchase masks with clear windows so our lips can be seen?**

Our Infection Prevention and Control team is actively looking at options for masks that have clear cut-outs where you can see the person's lips. So far, we've discovered that these masks are not available in level 2 (what healthcare workers use). We are not confident that those masks are available at a level that will provide safety to our clinicians involved in primary care however, we are still exploring different options. More information on this is to be shared when available.

### **Should we be wearing eye protection during clinical care?**

We've updated our guidance for wearing eye protection during the provision of client care. Goggles or face shields must be worn for all client care:

- If you are within less than 2 meters of a client and providing prolonged client care activities (i.e. bathing, changing diapers, physical assessments, suctioning, hands-on therapy, feeding, etc.), you must wear eye protection along with a mask. If you're just talking or meeting with a family caregiver, a face shield or goggles is not required.
- If you are more than 2 meters of a client when providing care then you don't need to wear eye protection with your mask (i.e. changing an empty bed, talking with a client from a distance, during some recreational activities, during some group activities, housekeeping, food services, fixing a lightbulb, etc.)

If you wear glasses, have hearing aids or microtia a face shield or mask with visor might be easier to wear. If you don't fall under the mentioned criteria then please use the goggles.

If you have questions about what personal protective equipment (PPE) to wear during clinical care, we've created a [visual guide for what PPE](#) to wear. This graphic is posted on the [COVID 19: Resources for staff page](#) and on the third floor and will be updated when there is a change in practice.

### **Do I need to wear goggles when working with a family member and can't maintain 2 meters distance (i.e. working on completing forms)?**

Goggles are meant to be worn for direct care with a client when 2 meters distance is not achievable. The only time you would wear goggles when interacting with a family member is when you can't maintain 6 feet of distance and you feel more comfortable with eye protection, when the individual has been isolated due to experiencing possible COVID-like symptoms, and because he/she has been newly admitted to the hospital and has to isolate in the room.

### **I wear glasses, can I use a face shield instead of goggles when interacting with clients?**

Yes, if a face shield can be worn in place of goggles should that be a more comfortable choice for you.

### **What if I don't have my own goggles? Where can I access protective eye gear?**

Face shields and goggles are available at the main pod nursing station, on the CCC nursing station and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor pods. If goggles/face shields are needed in your area, please contact your operations manager who'll then contact Frank Venturino at [FVenturino@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:FVenturino@hollandbloorview.ca).

### **Can protective eye gear be shared among users?**

Goggles and face shields can be reused after cleaning. After you're done using, please thoroughly disinfect them with Cavi-Wipes and place them in the allocated bins located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. **This practice does not include masks with visors attached. Those are to be disposed in regular garbage.**

### **How often should goggles/face shields be cleaned?**

Re-usable goggles and face shields should be cleaned:

- At least once a day
- When visibly soiled
- Exiting an isolation room
- Have been splashed or sprayed with bodily fluids
- Between use of different individuals (i.e. when shared among different individuals, not use between client interactions)

To properly clean goggles and face shields, use one cloth wipe to clean the surface and a second to disinfect.

### **What can I do to prevent my glasses from fogging while wearing a mask?**

There are a number of solutions to prevent glasses from fogging while wearing procedural masks, including (source: [New York Times](#)):

**Mold your mask.** Medical masks have built-in, bendable metal strips that you can mold to the bridge of your nose.

**Tighten the mask.** Adjust the ties or the ear loops so the mask fits snugly against your face. The ear savers are good for this.

**Pull up your mask.** An easier tip for day-to-day mask wear is to use the weight of your glasses to block the air. Pull the mask up over the bridge of the nose as high as you can (make sure it's still under your chin too) and let your glasses rest on top of the mask.

**Try other home remedies.** Popular suggestions for treating lenses this way include baby shampoo, toothpaste and shaving cream. (My girlfriend used shaving cream and said it worked for her). However, I would be cautious with this if your lenses are treated with a coating which promises protection against UV rays, glare, scratches, smudges, dust and water.

## **Staff Wellness**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **Do staff have access to mental health and wellness resources at Holland Bloorview?**

Taking care of your mental health and wellness is critically important to making it through this pandemic. You are encouraged to block off time in your day to turn off the news and do something to help connect to yourself, your family and loved ones.

We have a number of resources available on our [HB Connect Mental Health Hub](#) (only accessible via HB Connect) to support you with mental health needs. All employees also have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that will connect with you a licensed counsellor. [This service is available 24/7 and can be reached by calling 1-800-268-5211.](#) It is also available by app in the Google and Apple stores under "My EAP."

We have also launched a [Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#) page on our website to help support you during this pandemic.

Some of the resources shared include:

- Tips on how to adjust to working from home and dealing with new technologies for staff and managers.
- Information on companies supporting healthcare workers at this time (spoiler: free coffee and chicken).
- Details on how to take advantage of the Solution-Focused Health Care Coaching program and sign up for a one-on-one virtual coaching session.

[The Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#) page will be updated regularly with new resources! If you have any suggestions for what information would be beneficial, or come across a tip/resource that you think is important to share, please contact [humanresources@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:humanresources@hollandbloorview.ca).

### **What else is Holland Bloorview doing to support staff at this time?**

We have never been more proud and appreciative of our staff who are maneuvering through this situation with resilience, patience and excellence as you put our clients and families first. We are looking at ways to alleviate some of the stress and anxiety some of you might be feeling by providing opportunities within the hospital to decompress and feel at ease as much as possible. These offerings include:

- Changes to the parking policy (check Q&A on parking)
- Starting March 25, staff will have access to the pool showers and change rooms if they wish to take a shower before heading home.
- Effective immediately, anyone coming to work at the main site can dress casually.
- Designated respite rooms for staff are now available

To get access to more initiatives and resources, visit our new [Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#).

### **Are there external supports we can use?**

Canada's largest mental health teaching hospital, CAMH, is now accepting [self-referrals from health care workers in Toronto-based hospitals who are impacted by COVID-19 and require support for their mental health](#).

### **Is the Gymnasium open for staff use?**

The Gymnasium 0W300 (located in the Bloorview School Authority, not the fitness centre) is now available for staff use on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 12-2 p.m. and 3-5 p.m. on a drop-in basis. In order to maintain physical distancing and avoid sharing of equipment, group games and team sports are not permitted at this time. The gym's capacity is 5 individuals at a time including the gym's supervisor.

Staff should:

- Wash hands upon entrance to the gym and before leaving
- Complete sign in/sign out



- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet
- Disinfect all equipment after use

**Gym usage will be monitored regularly and adjusted based on demand and supervision availability. For the updated schedule, please check [HBConnect](#) regularly.**

**Note:** This initiative is for staff only. If clients/families inquire about using the gym during the mentioned times, please ask them to refer to their Therapeutic Recreation (TR) schedule and/or their TR specialist. There are designated times for TR groups throughout the week as well as family drop-in on Thursdays.

### **Will there be any other incentives offered for staff who are working diligently each day?**

In addition to the supportive measures we've put in place like the opening of staff only respite rooms and the wellness centre resources on our website, the main thing that will be offered is the pandemic pay that the province is presenting.

Despite valiant efforts by Ontario Health, the Ontario Hospital Association and our Toronto Academic Health Science Network partners advocating for pandemic pay for all healthcare workers, we were disappointed to learn that no additional changes would be made to the eligibility list.

Over the next few weeks, Holland Bloorview will be working closely with the ministry to complete the required funding agreements to facilitate payment to eligible employees. At the same time, our Finance and People and Culture teams, in collaboration with leaders across the organization will be reviewing the eligibility listing to ensure we have captured all eligible employees. Later in June, we will be sharing specific details on how the organization will administer the funds and the pay periods in July and August that will reflect the pandemic payments.

## **Ways to help**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **How can I help clients and families at Holland Bloorview?**

If you're looking to provide support to our clients and families during this challenging time, you can do so through the No Boundaries Fund and the Family Support Fund.

#### **No Boundaries Fund**

**Call for applications to the No Boundaries Fund.** Do you have a bright idea that can support our clients, families and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic? Thanks to our Foundation and the generous support of community donors we are able to fund the ideas that will make the greatest impact at this time.

#### **What's your bright idea?**

We are looking for any ideas that promote the health, wellness and support of our clients, families and staff that have been impacted by COVID-19. If your idea is related to safety equipment provided by the hospital, we ask that you contact your manager to discuss before applying. All ideas should also adhere to current physical distancing directives that we're all following.

### **Who can apply?**

Any staff of Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital can apply and ideas can also be co-created with clients and families.

### **How do I apply?**

No lengthy applications or red tape; just answer the questions below:

- 1) Applicant's name, job title and department
- 2) Your idea and the impact you hope it will achieve
- 3) An estimated budget (up to a maximum of \$1,000)
  - a. We will consider requests over \$1,000 under special circumstances

Send your responses to the questions above by email to [noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca) with the subject line 'No Boundaries Fund Application'.

### **How are ideas selected?**

Applications will be monitored daily. At the end of each week all applications will be reviewed by Julia and we will get back to applicants within 7 days of submission.

### **Questions?**

Email [noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca)

## **Family Support Fund**

During this Covid-19 pandemic, many of our clients are under strict isolation. And their parents are too – sacrificing paid work for an unknown period of time when their financial resources are already strained.

Under the leadership of our amazing Foundation, the Family Support Fund is being doubled so that we can help more families access the funds so they can make ends meet. Donations up to \$20,000 will be matched by the DH Gordon Foundation.

If you're interested in donating, click [here](#).

### **What should I do if I receive a donation offer/inquiry?**

During this challenging time, many people are rallying together to help our most vulnerable population and those who are supporting them.

If you get approached by an interested community member or a business, or receive an email about donation offers/inquiries of in-kind products (i.e. food, flowers, toys, personal protective equipment) please reach out to Molly McKeown at [mmckeown@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:mmckeown@hollandbloorview.ca) or Sandra Hawken at [SHawken@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:SHawken@hollandbloorview.ca) from the Foundation. They will be able to determine next steps on gift acceptance, coordinate logistics and donor recognition.

### **I have a heartfelt story that I would like to share. What can I do?**

We've heard stories from many of you about how proud you are to be part of the Holland Bloorview extended family and community at this time.

You've expressed thanks for compassionate and creative colleagues; have heard from families who have commended our innovative approaches to care; and continue to shout-out team members for their resiliency and readiness to help out in new roles.

We want to amplify and share those stories widely - whether it's via our website, social media channels or through media. Please e-mail **#HBStories** and help us transform those hallway conversations into narratives of gratitude.

### **How can I help with the Homemade Mask Drive campaign?**

On April 27, we launched a new campaign asking community members to make 1000 masks a week collectively for the next 4 weeks. Masks will be given to staff, clients and families for use when they are in the community and in situations where it is impractical or impossible to practice physical distancing (e.g. grocery shopping, on transit.)

Help us spread the word and share [this link](#) with your friends and family.

If you have any questions about this initiative, please contact Christine Hill at [Christine.Hill@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:Christine.Hill@hollandbloorview.ca) or Kim Tucker at [volunteers@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:volunteers@hollandbloorview.ca).

### **How can I sign up for a gym supervisor shift?**

To be able to support the gymnasium (0W300 or the basketball court) reopening for staff use, we're looking for staff members to fill the role of gym supervisor. The supervisor's role includes making sure that physical distancing and sanitization protocols are followed and making equipment available through the gym storage room.

If you are interested in scheduling yourself for this role, please visit [PickATime](#). Supervisor shifts are built in one-hour blocks, but staff can book 2 shifts back-to-back. **Please do not cancel a current screening or training shift in order to pick up a gym supervisor shift.**

#### **For inquiries:**

- If you have questions about the operation of this program, please email [Kristen English](mailto:kenglish@hollandbloorview.ca) at [kenglish@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:kenglish@hollandbloorview.ca) or [Heather Keating](mailto:hkeating@hollandbloorview.ca) at [hkeating@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:hkeating@hollandbloorview.ca).
- If you need to cancel a shift less than 48 hours in advance, or have any difficulty accessing the shifts in PickATime, please contact [Larissa Haluszka-Smith](mailto:lhaluszkasmith@hollandbloorview.ca) at [lhaluszkasmith@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:lhaluszkasmith@hollandbloorview.ca)
- For questions related to employee health and safety or infection control, please email [Kaley Carveth](mailto:kcarveth@hollandbloorview.ca) at [kcarveth@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:kcarveth@hollandbloorview.ca) and [Cara Sudoma](mailto:csudoma@hollandbloorview.ca) at [csudoma@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:csudoma@hollandbloorview.ca).

## **Food Service updates**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **Why did Tim Hortons' hour of operation change?**

As we restrict the amount of people at our building, we are modifying Tim Hortons service hours to reflect the lower number of people in the hospital.

Tim Hortons will be open Mon-Fri until 4 p.m. and will be closed on the weekend starting, March 25. Complimentary coffee will be delivered every evening and twice on weekends to inpatient third floor. Vending machine options are also available on first and third floors (including coffee).

Shifting the hours of Tim Hortons also gives us flexibility to redeploy resources to other initiatives such as the aforementioned free inpatient family caregiver dinners being provided until the end of April.

### **Why did Sodexo pause all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill?**

In an effort to minimize contact and reinforce physical distancing protocols at Holland Bloorview, **Sodexo has paused all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill as of April 15.** In its place, they have developed **two new programs** to support our dedicated staff, attentive caregivers and clients during this time of modified service.

#### ***Meals to Go Program***

Pre-packaged entrees are made available at the cafeteria in the open air fridges for reheating in microwaves at your convenience. Weekly rotational menus will be posted in the café and on HB Connect. From those menus, staff and families can also pre-order precooked single serving meals and family size meals to take home by e-mailing Chef Todd McKinnon at [tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca) by 5 p.m. daily for next-day pick-up in the café between 2-3 p.m.

#### ***Grocery to Go Program***

Need the essentials but also trying to maintain physical distancing which is hard at grocery stores? Sodexo has you covered at their Pop-Up Grocery store. You'll find everything from fresh produce and dairy products to your everyday pantry items, prepackaged and available at grocery store prices. This pop-up store is located in the salad bar area of the Garden Grill and is available between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

If you have any questions or suggestions for items you'd like to have available, please contact Chef Todd McKinnon at [tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca).

## **General Health Information**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What should I do if I'm feeling sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?**

- Stay home and avoid contact with other, with the exception of seeking medical care.

- If you stay home from work, notify your manager and call Holland Bloorview's AWAY line (x3020).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

### **What can I do to protect myself from virus spread?**

Keep your workspaces clean and hygienic; surfaces and objects (e.g. telephone and keyboards) should be wiped with disinfectant daily. Remember the [4 moments of hand hygiene](#), wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub for at least 20 seconds. Also, practice physical distancing (2 meters).

### **I've been increasingly concerned and nervous with taking transit to work as the COVID-19 situation continues to grow and spread. Wondering what I can do to keep myself and those I serve safe.**

We recognize that staff who commute via TTC may feel increased anxiety around potential exposure to COVID-19. We know that the best way to protect yourself is by performing proper hand hygiene and avoiding touching your face, and practice physical distancing.

TTC is taking extra precautions to protect riders. Since January, they have significantly increased their cleaning and disinfection of all their vehicles, especially around high-touch points such as grab points, buttons, railings, handles and straps.

They have also posted safety tips posted on their website on how to take public transit safely during pandemic. This advice includes practicing safe physical distancing and traveling only for essential purposes.

### **What is the best way to protect myself from COVID-19?**

- Stay home if you are feeling sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol content if soap and water are unavailable.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, especially with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.

Use cleaning products to disinfect objects and surfaces you commonly touch, such as doorknobs, countertops, phones and toys.

### **What can I do to protect myself and loved ones if a family member in my home is sick?**

If someone in your home is ill (with COVID-19 or other seasonal ailments), we recommend the following measures to protect yourself and other members of your family:

- Practicing good hand hygiene
- If possible, practice physical distancing
- Dedicate one bathroom to the person that is sick
- Dispose of tissues as they are used
- Clean and disinfect your kitchen and bathrooms more frequently
- If possible, have the person who is sick wear a procedure mask

### **With community spread now happening in Toronto, how do I protect my loved ones at home?**

We know that the pandemic outbreak has created a lot of worry for our staff who can't self-isolate due to the nature of their work. To protect your family from potential exposure to COVID-19, we recommend following procedures that you would normally take during more familiar outbreaks, like the seasonal flu or Rhinovirus.

Some tips include:

- Practicing good hand hygiene
- Wear appropriate PPE when working with children in isolation
- Remove street/work clothing and taking a shower when you get home before contact with your family **OR** take a shower and change into street clothing before returning home

### **Should I keep hand sanitizer in the car?**

With hot days coming, it is not advisable to keep hand sanitizer in the car. The heat can degrade the effectiveness of hand sanitizer.

### **Are there risks of lighting cigarettes after applying hand sanitizer?**

Yes, if the hand sanitizer is not completely rubbed into your hands, there is a chance that the alcohol in the hand sanitizer may ignite. Please be very cautious.

## **General information on the COVID-19**

[\(Back to top\)](#)

### **What is a coronavirus/ novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

### **What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?**

Common signs include (but not limited to) respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. Most cases are mild. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and in rare cases death.

### **Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?**

Yes, some coronaviruses can be transmitted from person to person, usually after close contact (two meters) with an infected person. Transmission occurs through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes.

### **Is there a vaccine available for this infection?**

At this time there isn't a vaccine available for the COVID-19.

### **Are there reliable places I can get more information?**

Yes, you can get more information at any of these sites:

- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Ontario Hospital Association](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Centres for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

### **What's the difference between seasonal coronaviruses and Covid-19?**

The seasonal coronavirus is NOT the same as the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. Seasonal coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses (including the common cold), and can spread easily between people. Common symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. There are strains of coronaviruses that have caused more severe illness in humans in the past, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and now, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). COVID-19 is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough.

### **What are the different types of COVID-19 contact? What do I do in various scenarios?**

With community transmission occurring in the province, it's possible to come in contact with presumptive or confirmed positive individuals.

We are most concerned about "close contact" that includes kissing, hugging or sharing eating and drinking utensils, close conversations, contact with secretions, being in the same childcare room, classroom or carpool.

Distance and prolonged exposure are also factors to look out for. For example, if you were standing/sitting within 6 feet from the infected individual and if you've spent more than 15 minutes with them.

Here are a few scenarios and recommended procedures to follow if you are suspected to have come into contact with a COVID-19 positive person. In all cases, you can reach out to occupational health for

guidance.

**1. You've received an email from a business you recently visited to inform you that one of their employees has tested positive for COVID-19.**

- If you are currently asymptomatic, you can still come to work and follow appropriate infection prevention and control protocols, going through active screening and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- In most stores, many procedures are put in place to practice safe physical distancing and minimize the risk of community spread like lines on the floor to mark two meters of distance, Plexiglas barriers, staff wearing PPE, etc.

**2. You test positive for COVID-19**

- Occupational health will advise you to isolate yourself at home/hospital for 14 days since symptom onset or until a negative test result is received and no new/worsening symptoms develop.
- Follow the guidance of public health and Holland Bloorview's occupational health team.

**3. Your spouse tests positive and you're asymptomatic.**

- This is considered direct contact. You would be advised to stay home and self-monitor for 14 days. In this case, your coworkers are not considered a contact, hence no further action is required.

**4. Your spouse tests positive, you are symptomatic and have tested positive yourself.**

- Occupational health and infection control will advise you to stay at home and will initiate the contact tracing process at Holland Bloorview. Only individuals who you have been in direct contact with would be contacted with information on next steps.

**5. You have direct contact (examples include kissing, hugging or sharing eating and drinking utensils, close conversations, contact with secretions, being in the same childcare room, classroom or carpool) with a COVID-19 individual?**

- Occupational health will advise you to self-isolate at home for 14 days from contact with positive individual and monitor yourself for symptom development.
- Work self-isolation is a possibility where you would maintain self-isolation measures outside of work for 14 days but you may be able to attend work while adhering to universal masking recommendations, meticulous hand hygiene and maintaining physical distancing except in care provision. This would be determined on a case-by-case basis based on staffing needs and client safety.



- If you become symptomatic, please stay home, contact the AWAY line at ext. 3020 and follow the direction of occupational health.

As a reminder, if you are symptomatic in any way, please stay home and call the AWAY line at ext. 3020 to report your symptoms and wait for further direction from occupational health.

If you are unsure of what you should do, please reach out to occupational health or leave a request for a call back at the away line.

### **What levels of risk are there for exposure to COVID-19?**

#### **Low risk includes:**

**Living in the same building** where someone has tested positive. Being in the same school, place of worship, workplace or building carries a small risk for exposure.

**Living in or traveling from a city or country where there is major community spread of COVID-19**, also carries a small risk. Outdoor contacts are much safer than indoor contacts.

#### **High risk includes:**

**Living with a person who tested positive for COVID-19.** This carries the highest risk of transmitting the infection.