

Friday, April 3, 2020



POINT OF CARE RISK ASSESSMENTS AND THE USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD), and Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) released a joint statement that was intended to provide clarity on the approach of protecting the health and safety of health care workers and the patients they care for within Ontario's hospital system. Within the joint statement, the parties acknowledged that they are guided by appropriate public health advice including consideration of the guidance on PPE usage from Public Health Ontario.

Health and safety standards

The following health and safety standards have been implemented for front-line health care workers in Ontario hospitals to be applied when dealing with suspected, presumed, or confirmed COVID-19 patients:

1. A **point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA)** must be performed before every patient interaction. If a health care worker determines, based on their professional and clinical judgement that health and safety measures may be required in the delivery of care to the patient, then the worker shall have access to the appropriate health and safety control measures, including an N95 respirator.
2. At a minimum, contact and droplet precautions must be used by health care workers for all interactions with suspected, presumed or confirmed COVID-19 patients. Contact and droplet precautions include gloves, face shields or goggles, gowns, and surgical/procedure masks.
3. All health care workers who are within two metres of suspected, presumed or confirmed COVID-19 patients shall have access to appropriate PPE. This will include access to: surgical/procedure masks, fit tested NIOSH-approved N-95 respirators or approved equivalent or better protection, gloves, face shields with side protection (or goggles), impermeable or, at least, fluid resistant gowns.
4. The PCRA should include the frequency and probability of routine or emergent Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures (AGMPs) being required. N95 respirators, or approved equivalent or better protection, must be used by all health care workers in the room where AGMPs are being performed, are frequent or probable, or with any intubated patients.
AGMPs include:
 - Intubation and related procedures (e.g. manual ventilation, open endotracheal suctioning)
 - Cardio pulmonary resuscitation
 - Bronchoscopy
 - Sputum induction
 - Non-invasive ventilation (i.e. BiPAP), open respiratory/airway suctioning, high frequency oscillatory ventilation, tracheostomy care, nebulized therapy/aerosolized medication administration
 - High flow heated oxygen therapy devices (e.g. ARVO, optiflow) and autopsy
5. The Organizational Risk Assessment must be continuously refreshed ensuring that it assesses the appropriate health and safety control measures to mitigate the transmission of infections, including PPE measures.
6. It remains important for hospitals to continue to maintain responsible conservation and stewardship of PPE. As a result, the hospital will need to assess the available supply of PPEs on an ongoing basis.

Reference:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_covid_joint_statement.aspx

HDS STATS RELATED TO COVID-19

As always, the safety of our staff, physicians and patients is paramount. In order to keep you apprised of the statistics related to COVID-19 in our facility, our bulletins now include this chart.

Currently Suspected COVID-19	Total Suspected Cases Since March 1	Total Swabs Sent Out for Testing	Negative Results	Positive Results
0	4	4	4	0

As of April 3, 2020, we are pleased to report that we have ZERO COVID-19 cases (staff or patients).

NIAGARA HEALTH STATS RELATED TO COVID-19

We certainly understand the concern with COVID-19 and its impact on the Niagara region. Our bulletins will now also include a link to a page which publicly reports on the patient activity and testing taking place at Niagara Health related to COVID-19: <https://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/covid19casereporting>

ONLINE RESOURCES

Some other reference material:

- [Niagara Region Public Health](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada information on Coronaviruses](#)
- [Government of Ontario - Wuhan Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#)

OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT

- We continue to be deeply committed to keeping our patients and each other safe.
- We continue to monitor this ever-changing situation with our health partners, adding necessary precautions as appropriate. Much like our health partners, we are acting on the best advice of the Province's Chief Medical Officer of Health and other leading public health officials.
- Thanks for your ongoing co-operation and tireless dedication.

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