

# Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

April 9, 2021



## **In This Issue: COVID-19 Bulletin**

[Employee vaccination FAQs](#)

[Bioethics Grand Rounds with Karen McGrath](#)

[Top 4 reasons we still need to wear masks even if vaccinated](#)

[Food safety – All phases](#)

[Inpatient hair services during Yellow phase](#)

[Stryker's Flyte PPE system for COVID-19 suspect / confirmed patients](#)

[COVID-19 Bulletin and Horizon Bulletin satisfaction survey](#)

[Self-screening reminder](#)

[Use of medical grade masks](#)

[Acceptance of donated cloth patient items during Yellow phase](#)

[GNB Guidance: Use of Eye Protection](#)

[GNB Updates](#)

[Horizon Dashboard Data from April 7](#)

## **Bioethics Grand Rounds with Karen McGrath**

Please join Karen McGrath, Horizon's President and CEO, on Tuesday, April 13 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. for a discussion on:

"Should the province of New Brunswick provide health services to residents of other provinces while there are waitlists or wait times for residents of New Brunswick?"

Ethics Grand Rounds are held via Skype and are open to all staff.

Your interest and participation are very much desired and encouraged. If further information is required, please contact Tricia Yeo at 506-648-6556 or [Tricia.Yeo@HorizonNB.ca](mailto:Tricia.Yeo@HorizonNB.ca).

## **COVID-19 Bulletin**

### **Employee vaccination FAQs**

Many staff members and physicians continue to have questions about our COVID-19 vaccination clinics. The [Employee Vaccination FAQs page](#) on Skyline has been updated with new questions and answers to help. We will continue to update this page as new information becomes available.

# Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

## April 9, 2021

### Top 4 reasons we still need to wear masks even if vaccinated

So, are you sick of wearing masks yet? Masks have played a critical role both in preventing transmission (source control) and getting infected with COVID-19. Nonetheless, all the personal measures we take every day to protect ourselves and others has a cost.

For now, this cost will be well worth it. Here are the Top 4 reasons New Brunswickers must still wear a mask.

1. **It will take months before the majority of the population will get vaccinated.** Currently, less than 15 per cent of New Brunswickers over the age of 16 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. It will be several months from now before the majority of adults will have received two vaccine doses, and this will not occur for the population under 16 until sometime in 2022. We also do not yet know what proportion of the total population requires vaccination in order to obtain herd immunity. Until we reach herd immunity, we still need to wear masks.
2. **Vaccines are not 100 per cent effective.** All of the vaccines approved in Canada for COVID-19 have very high levels of protection. These vaccines reduce the risk of symptomatic infection by approximately 70 to 95 per cent and early evidence indicates they reduce asymptomatic infection by a similar margin. This means that some vaccinated New



Brunswickers will get infected. Because vaccines are not 100 per cent effective, we still need to wear masks.

3. **We do not know the duration of vaccine protection.** So far, we know that vaccine protection is good for at least four months. These vaccines are brand new, so it will be a year from now before we know if they are protective for one year, and two years from now to know if they are protective for two years. In the meantime, we still need to wear masks.
4. **People can become reinfected.** There is now good evidence to show that people previously infected with earlier strains of COVID-19 can be reinfected with new variants. It is therefore possible that we could see new variants causing infection in vaccinated persons. Until we know the answer to this question, we still need to wear masks.

Yes, we are all tired of wearing masks, but for now, we need to continue to wear a mask, maintain two metres (six feet) of physical distancing, limit our social networks, avoid large crowds, practice cough etiquette and use frequent hand hygiene.

These measures are so effective, New Brunswick has not had a single influenza transmission this winter. There is a good chance we will be able to diminish these measures over time, but for now we should continue these safety practices.

# Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

April 9, 2021

On a positive note, this pandemic has reinforced how important it is to practice good hand hygiene at all times and stay home if you have respiratory symptoms. These two habits should never disappear.

## Food safety – All phases

During the pandemic, **health care workers (HCWs) are to take additional precautions to minimize the risk of transmission of infections and to eliminate the sharing of food.** When food is shared there is a risk that the food containers may become contaminated through contact with the hands of the HCWs.

HCWs are **not** to eat or drink in patient care areas, nursing stations or charting areas. The consumption of food is limited to **lunchrooms** and **cafeterias**.

The Public Health Agency of Canada: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Healthcare Settings advises against eating, and drinking should not occur in areas where direct patient care is provided.

What food can HCWs bring into the facility?

### **Take-out food**

Take-out food from licensed establishments is permitted with the following conditions:



- Must be packaged for **personal consumption** i.e., personal size pizza, burger, sandwich etc. These are for a single individual to consume; there is to be no sharing of take-out food
- **Food that is packaged to be shared i.e.** buffet style packaging, party pizzas, sandwich platters, etc. **is not permitted.**
- The individual delivering the food will need to successfully pass the screening protocol at the facility's designated entrance before the food is accepted into the facility.
- The HCW will be required to pick up the take-out food from the access point.
  - Delivery individuals will not be permitted to deliver within the facility.
  - Staff/volunteers working in the screening area are not responsible for delivering this food.

### **Storage of Food**

The consumption and storage of food must follow [Infection and Prevention and Control Routine Practices](#) where the food is kept and consumed in non-work areas such as lunch rooms.

### **Lunchrooms**

HCWs **must** perform hand hygiene before and after eating.

As facial protection is removed while eating and drinking, physical distancing of two metres (six feet) **must** be maintained.

Lunch and break times should be staggered to ensure HCWs

## Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

April 9, 2021

are able to maintain physical distancing of two metres (six feet) and respect lunchroom capacity limitations.

### Inpatient hair services during Yellow phase

A guidance document was developed for the provision of barber and hairstylist services by licensed providers to Horizon inpatients in facilities that do not have on site services.

The [Infection Prevention & Control Guidelines: Barber and Hairstylist Services for Horizon In-Patients During COVID-19 - Yellow Phase](#).

All IPC Guidance documents can be access, by phase on the IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline page [here](#).

### Stryker's Flyte PPE system for COVID-19 suspect / confirmed patients

The ID-IPC COVID-19 committee recommends the Stryker hoods **not** be used during surgery with suspect / confirmed COVID-19 patients, as a N95 respirator and eye protection are still required in addition to the Stryker's Flyte system.

The Stryker system does not meet the PPE requirements for health care workers treating COVID-19 patients. Stryker's Flyte PPE system is not a respiratory protective device, due to the cooling fan (as opposed to a filtered exhaust system).



For non-suspect / confirmed COVID-19 patient, the Stryker hood is sufficient on its own as source control.

### COVID-19 Bulletin and Horizon Bulletin satisfaction survey

Let us know how satisfied you are with the COVID-19 Bulletin and Horizon Bulletin by completing a short survey by **April 15**.

Please click [here](#), or access it through Skyline's homepage.

Your insights will help us continue to improve the internal corporate communication email process so that Horizon employees and physicians receive important information in an efficient and accessible way.

### Self-screening reminder

We want to remind all employees and physicians of the importance of remaining familiar with the screening questions.

The questions and signage for employees and physicians can be accessed [here](#). For your awareness, the patient and visitor screening questions can be found [here](#).

Remember:

- Employees and physicians are required to self screen prior to leaving home for their shift.

## Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

April 9, 2021

- Once at the facility, employees and physicians must swipe their ID badge.
- Employees and physicians who leave the facility for any reason (break, meal period, to smoke, or interfacility travel) will be required to self screen upon their return.

Employee Health is available daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to answer any questions or concerns

please call 1-833-978-2580 and leave a voicemail and your call will be returned within two hours.

**Please note:** If you have travelled to the Edmundston area for non work-related purposes, please self monitor closely for symptoms.

### Use of medical grade masks

**All employees and physicians are reminded that they are required to take a medical grade face mask home with them at the end of each shift to be worn upon entry to a Horizon facility for the start of their next shift.**

The use of community masks / cloth facial coverings while entering and exiting Horizon facilities is no longer an acceptable practice.



Upon

arrival at their workstation, unit, or department, employees and physicians must replace their mask with a new one to ensure the integrity of their mask has not been compromised and is safe for use.

Employees and physicians are reminded to use designated staff entrances that are separate from access points used for patient, visitors and other individuals. In facilities with only

shared entrances, employees and physicians will follow the separate pathway for staff and respect the two-meter (six feet) physical distancing requirement.

They must present their Horizon ID badge and advise the screener they are wearing a medical grade mask and do not require a new mask.

Employees and physicians must ensure they have a medical grade mask to wear into the facility at the start of each shift and upon each re-entry into the building during a shift.

### Acceptance of donated cloth patient items during Yellow phase

In the Yellow phase, Horizon will accept donations of cloth items for patients. This includes knitted baby hats, finger

## Bulletin #134: COVID-19 Information

April 9, 2021

puppets and comfort dolls, homemade quilts, blankets, baby layettes, etc.

Volunteer Resources will coordinate the acceptance and distribution of these items with the public screening access points. Only items that pass the current COVID-19 screening Criteria will be accepted.

All items received will be laundered prior to distribution to the appropriate nursing unit / department for patient use. It is noted that the items are to be used by one patient and not shared between patients.

### **GNB guidance: Use of eye protection**

In line with the recently released memo on mask use in health care facilities ([memo #51](#)) and given the arrival of COVID-19 variants in New Brunswick, the Pandemic Task Force is issuing guidance, available [here](#), relating to the use of eye protection across all colour alert phases.

The use of PPE must be guided by a point of care risk assessment, which must be performed prior to any interaction with the patient / resident or the patient / resident environment.



### **GNB update**

Public Health reported seven new cases yesterday, one case in Zone 3 (Fredericton region) and six in Zone 4 (Edmundston region).

As well, the provincial government announced updates to its COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Vaccination clinics will no longer be organized for large employers and home care workers as previously planned. Instead, people in these groups will be vaccinated once their age cohort is eligible.

Rotational workers, truck drivers and regular cross-border commuters may now choose to schedule an appointment to receive their first dose of the vaccine through a regional health authority clinic.

The full news release is available [here](#).

When available, today's news release can be access [here](#).