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#### **Donning and Doffing Masks**

As a follow up to [Bulletin #20 – COVID-19 – April 9 2020](#), please watch this instructional [video](#) on how to safely and properly don and doff masks. This video will be shared on our social media channels this evening.

As well, we have updated the instructional posters for How to Wear a Mask with [Loops](#) / [Ties](#); these documents are also available to the public on our website, and will be shared on social media.

#### **MyHealthNB allows patients to check their COVID-19 test**

Horizon has partnered with the New Brunswick Department of Health to allow patients to check their COVID-19 test results online.

MyHealthNB launched a new website. If a patient was tested on or after April 20, and was provided with a unique registration code, they may register for a MyHealthNB account to check their own COVID-19 test result online at <https://myhealth.gnb.ca/>.

This gives patients who have been tested at a Horizon Community Assessment Centre secure access to their test results from home when it has been processed – usually within 24 to 48 hours.

Please note that MyHealthNB access for patients who have been tested at Emergency Departments is not yet available.

Click [here](#) to see how this works.

#### **Patient Care Units treating COVID-19 Patients**

In alignment with PHAC guidelines, the Committee recommends that processes be in place to manage health care

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workers' (HCW) exposure to COVID-19. The number of HCWs caring for individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be minimized whenever possible. Activity and movement on COVID-19 units should be restricted to essential treatments and services.

The following precautions are followed when HCWs are assigned to work in COVID-19 and non COVID-19 Units during the same shift;

- They must change their uniform and wear a mask prior to going to work in a Non COVID -19 unit.
- The need to shower is optional when appropriate precautions are followed as per [Infection Prevention & Control Guidance for The Management of Suspect/Confirmed COVID-19 Patients](#).
- HCWs are encouraged to shower if unprotected exposure to contaminants occurs.

### COVID-19 Cleaning Recommendations

#### **Cleaning practices related to transport of COVID-19 patients from unit to unit**

In keeping with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) guidelines, high touch surfaces such as handrails or door handles/push buttons and elevators along the route taken by the patient transferred from unit to unit should be immediately



cleaned and disinfected. It is noted the hallway floor is a low risk surface and can continue to be cleaned as per regular EVS cleaning schedule.

#### **Body bag cleaning and morgue process**

All body bags are disposable and do not need to be wiped down prior to the body being transferred to the morgue. Routine practices should be used properly and consistently when handling deceased bodies or preparing bodies for autopsy or transfer to mortuary services.

### COVID-19 Continuous Use of Masks

#### **Directive on the Continuous Use of Masks for Full Shifts in Health-care Settings**

The Pandemic Task Force is clarifying its directive on the continuous use of surgical/procedure masks by health care workers (HCWs).

This directive is being issued in response to the emerging evidence that asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic or minimally symptomatic individuals can transmit COVID-19 and is meant to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by HCWs to their patients and co-workers.

Continuous use of masks is the practice of wearing the same mask for repeated close contact with different patients, without removing the mask between patient encounters.

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This directive aligns with the guidance provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). It also supports the previous provincial initiatives aimed at improving safety for both HCWs and patients, while maintaining judicious use of masks and PPE.

While this initiative will increase the use of PPE, in other jurisdictions, a consistent policy of continuous mask use has led to reductions in overall PPE usage. PPE conservation is critical, and a sustainable approach is required. Supplies are being monitored closely and guidance is being developed for emergency prioritization of PPE should a shortage occur. It is recommended that HCWs minimize their mask use to two masks per shift where possible.

### **Clinical Settings**

All HCWs working in all patient care areas who have any direct or indirect contact with patients must wear a surgical/procedure mask continuously, at all times and in all areas of their workplace when a physical distance of two metres cannot be maintained and a physical barrier (ie: plexiglass) is not in place to prevent transmission of droplets.

The surgical/procedure mask should be immediately changed and safely disposed of whenever it is damaged, soiled/wet, and after care for any patient on Droplet/Contact or Contact Isolation Precautions.



HCWs must take care not to touch the front of their mask. If they touch or adjust their mask they must immediately perform hand hygiene.

HCWs will leave the patient's room if they need to remove their mask.

HCWs will follow all Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols including hand hygiene and the use of additional PPE when delivering patient care according to the IPC point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA).

When taking a break or eating a meal, the HCW must remove their mask per the guidance for extended and reuse below. If the mask is not damaged, soiled/wet or contaminated, it should be stored safely for reuse. Physical distancing must be maintained while the mask is removed. A mask should be donned per the instructions below before returning to work.

Masks (surgical/procedure/N95) do not need to be changed between COVID (+) patients on dedicated units except when damaged/soiled/wet or when indicated according to PCRA. Masks cannot be reused on COVID units.

### **Non-Clinical Settings**

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All HCWs who do not work in patient care areas must wear a surgical/procedure mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Do not touch the outside of your mask while it is on your face or pull your mask below your chin while you're wearing it. Improperly wearing a mask increases the risk for cross contamination.

Guidance for donning and doffing surgical/procedure masks for continuous use is available [here](#).

### **GNB Updates**

Public Health reported no new cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, April 21.

The number of confirmed cases in New Brunswick is 118 and the number of active cases is 16. To date, 102 people have recovered. There are five patients hospitalized, including one person in an intensive care unit.