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Dear staff and physicians,

Starting Monday, May 11, we will begin reintroducing some critical and urgent services to allow elective surgeries to resume. These services were previously put on hold as we prepared for and responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in New Brunswick.

However, I must be clear that we are not back to normal operations, and even as cases of COVID-19 are low, we must be vigilant in following Public Health and Infection, Prevention and Control guidelines.

We will continue to monitor our occupancy rate in our hospitals and be diligent about admissions and discharges to ensure we are able to quickly react to a surge of COVID-19 patients.

Our regional and community hospitals will cautiously resume some critical and urgent elective surgeries. All surgical patients will be tested for COVID-19 at least three (3) days in advance of their planned surgery date. After being tested, patients will be asked to self-isolate until they come to the hospital.

Ambulatory care services and professional services, including outpatient clinics, laboratory services, diagnostic imaging, electrodiagnostic, respiratory therapy and therapeutic services are resuming for these elective surgery cases through **scheduled appointments only**.

Our community health centres will continue to provide access to primary health care for residents in person and by telephone via scheduled appointments.

There will be **no walk-in appointments**. Patients will be sent home if they do not have an appointment.

Patients coming in for booked appointments will be **asked to only arrive for their appointment 15 minutes early**, maximum. **Patients who arrive early may be asked to wait in their vehicle**.

We expect that offering these services by appointment only will continue into the foreseeable future, and possibly until there is a vaccine available.

As you know, the capacity of our waiting rooms and ambulatory care areas will need to significantly decrease to ensure physical distancing. Our Facilities, Engineering and Property

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Management team is putting measures in place to make this easy for our outpatients.

**Active screening** of patients and designated visitors will continue. Patients **must wear a mask** when coming into any Horizon facility; homemade (community) masks are acceptable. Those who do not have a mask will be provided one during the screening process. For patients and designated visitors, masks must be worn at all times when in the facility.

**Staff and physicians will be responsible for self-screening starting Monday, May 11**, and protocols for wearing procedural masks will continue.

Everyone must continue to respect physical distancing, unless it is not possible for clinical reasons, and clean their hands as they enter and leave the facility.

The Executive Leadership Team and I are proud of the work you've done to ensure you are providing safe and quality care to our patients, clients, and communities. We appreciate your support as we reintroduce services and navigate this crisis together.

### [Childcare Responsibilities](#)

All employees of Horizon are essential workers and have remained on site for the duration of the pandemic. While working from your regular worksite is the norm, we recognize that some employees have personal circumstances that still require accommodation by working or remaining at home.

While schools and daycares are still closed, we expect daycare services will reopen sooner rather than later. Until then, we ask that you continue taking the following steps:

- As a first step, **if you are unable to access daycare services**, we ask that you attempt to the best of your ability to make safe alternate childcare arrangements or share childcare responsibilities with a member of your immediate household or your second "bubble" household.
- As a second step, if you are unable to make safe alternate arrangements or share childcare responsibilities with a member of your immediate household or second "bubble" household, we ask that you discuss alternate working hours arrangements with your supervisor. Working from home may be an option if your work can be effectively performed remotely and you are equipped to do so. We know that your ability to work from home will also depend greatly on the level of care your child or children require.
- As a third step, parents who require early learning and child care are directed to contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on how to access child care services through their [Parent Portal](#) or by calling 1-833-221-9339.
- Finally, as a last step, where employees are unable to make alternate childcare arrangements, cannot work from home, and cannot access early learning and child care services they will be provided with leave with pay.

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Among the other options to allow you to report to work, your work schedules may be modified and adapted to your situation.

**This may include introducing evening and weekend work for some employees or altering rotation schedules to allow for more opportunity for employees to be in the workplace.**

In addition, if it is shown that you do not take the necessary measures to find a place in daycare, appropriate administrative measures will be taken, such as the application of unpaid leave of absence.

### GNB Updates

The province's COVID-19 recovery plan has transitioned to the next phase. Phase 2, also designated as Orange level, includes the resumption of elective surgeries and the reopening of businesses and activities while working to prevent a resurgence of transmission.

Under Phase 2 (Orange), several activities and openings are permitted, subject to maintaining physical distancing measures, [general guidelines from Public Health](#) and the [Guidelines for New Brunswick Workplaces](#) issued by WorkSafe NB.

Businesses do not need to be inspected before re-opening, but they must prepare an [operational plan](#) that can be provided to officials, if requested. Businesses may open immediately, but it is up to each business operator to decide if they are ready and if all guidelines have been met.

Re-openings and activities include:

- Elective surgeries and other non-emergency health services, including dental, physiotherapy, optometry and massage therapy.
- Outdoor public gatherings, with physical distancing, of 10 or fewer people.
- Indoor public gatherings, with physical distancing, of 10 or fewer people for in-person religious services, weddings and funerals.
- All in-person programs at post-secondary institutions, subject to the COVID-19 directives from Public Health. Virtual education options should be continued wherever possible.
- Cultural venues such as museums, galleries and libraries.
- Offices not deemed essential during the initial phase.
- Retail establishments, including malls.
- Restaurants.
- Campgrounds and outdoor recreational activities, such as zoos and outfitters.
- Early learning and child care centres regulated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will be permitted to reopen as of **May 19**. The department will contact operators to provide further information in the coming days.
- Non-regulated child care providers may open as of today but must adhere to Public Health guidelines, including having an operational plan.
- Day camps, if the organization can adhere to Public Health measures set out in the document called *COVID-19 Recovery Phase: Guidance to Early Learning and Childcare Facilities and Day Camps*.
- ATV trails across the province.

In addition, face masks will be required to be worn in public if physical distancing cannot be maintained.

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### Patient and Designated Visitor Information

Things look different at Horizon facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. To support patients, clients, designated visitors and health care workers while Horizon resumes additional priority elective surgeries and continues to have additional precautionary practices in place, information sheets and a facility entrance poster have been developed.

All information sheets will be available in English and French on the [Skyline Coronavirus page](#) and [HorizonNB.ca](#) by end of day Monday, May 11.

#### Information Sheets

- Preparing for surgery ([English](#) / [French](#))
- Appointments ([English](#) / *French coming soon!*)
- Visitors ([English](#) / *French coming soon!*)

#### Facility Entrance Poster

- Appointments only – 8.5 x 11 ([Bilingual](#))
  - Larger sizes ([12 x 18](#) and [24 x 36](#)) can be printed at a [Horizon print shop](#).