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Reminder: Continuous Use of Masks

Thank you for wearing your mask while in a Horizon facility. Since wearing a mask at work is mandatory, please remember that 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. The duration of the continuous use is dependent on the nature of the task or activity being undertaken.

The aim of the directive on [Continuous Use of Masks](#) by health care workers (HCWs) is to ensure health care worker safety while protecting our supply of masks.

If the surgical/procedure mask is NOT damaged, soiled/wet or contaminated, it should be stored for re-use.

- Fold the mask in half (lengthwise or widthwise), so the outside surfaces are touching each other, carefully store in a bag labelled with your name and date. This will avoid destroying the shape of the mask and to prevent contamination.

- If proper storage in a bag is not feasible, masks should be discarded after each use.

To minimize the risk of self-contamination, HCWs are reminded NOT to let their mask hang off their ear, sit below their chin or hang around their neck.

HCWs must discard used masks after their shift even if the surgical/procedure mask is NOT damaged, soiled/wet or contaminated. Masks cannot be kept for re-use outside the facilities.

Updated self-screening criteria for employees and physicians

Please review the updated criteria related to the Campbellton Area that has been added to the employee and physician self-screening questionnaire:

If you have worked in the Campbellton Region (Zone 5) in the last 14 days, please note the below requirements:

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- **Horizon Employees who have worked in the Adult Residential Facility (ARF) in Atholville must contact Employee Health prior to returning to work.**

Updated posters are available on the [Coronavirus Skyline page](#).

All employees and physicians are reminded that they must self-screen, clean their hands, and follow protocols related to appropriate physical distancing and wearing of procedural masks in all Horizon facilities.

[SNB Scheduled Outages](#)

Due to necessary infrastructure security patching, applications/services outages are scheduled for ALL Horizon Areas. Click [here](#) to view the full outage schedule.

[Self-Isolation Guidance for Asymptomatic Individuals](#)

Note: This guidance does not apply to persons who are COVID-19 positive or to persons who have been ordered by Public Health to self-isolate. These individuals will be given more restrictive advice.

Self-isolation means staying at one place for accommodations and avoiding contact with other people to help prevent the spread of disease to others in your home and your community.

Individuals directed to self-isolate are expected to take the following measures:

- Limit contact with others. Do not leave your accommodation / property unless to seek unexpected medical care or to attend a funeral or burial service. If this is necessary, travel directly to and from the place receiving medical care or the funeral or burial service.
- Avoid contact with individuals with chronic conditions, compromised immune system or older adults as they are more at risk of complications from COVID-19.
- Make arrangements for food and other necessities to be delivered.
- If you are staying with others:
 - Have everyone make best efforts to maintain a 2-meter distance from others. If unable to maintain social distance a non-medical mask is required.
 - Stay in a separate bedroom and if possible, use a separate bathroom.
 - Other individuals in the accommodations may still attend work, pick up essential items and run essential errands. However, they should not participate in any gatherings and no visitors should enter their accommodations during the 14-day period.
- Follow general public health measures:
 - Practice good handwashing. Proper handwashing requires regularly and thoroughly washing your hands with soap and water.
 - Within the accommodations, regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaners.

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- Practice good respiratory hygiene. When you cough or sneeze, do so into a tissue; dispose of the tissue and wash your hands afterwards. If you do not have a tissue available, cough into your sleeve or elbow.
- Wearing a non-medical mask is required when unable to maintain physical distancing in the community.

- All individuals in the household should self-monitor during the 14-day period. If you or anyone else in the household develops symptoms, the symptomatic individual should isolate from others as quickly as possible and immediately call 811. All other individuals in the household must self-isolate (and not leave the accommodations for work or other reasons except for medical or other emergencies) until COVID-19 is ruled out. If COVID-19 is confirmed all persons in the accommodation must follow the advice of Public Health.

Movement of physicians and staff between jurisdictions and NB health zones

The Task Force has issued several memos about the movement of physicians and staff between jurisdictions and between health zones. For ease of reference, the Task Force is recalling these memos (14, 16, 19 and 21) and replacing it with the following directives:

1) Effective June 22, all health-care workers who live and work in New Brunswick must self-isolate for 14 days before returning to work if they leave the province. This includes fee-for-service physicians.

The following exceptions apply to this directive:

- a) A health-care worker who has crossed the border for work purposes.
- b) A health-care worker who lives or works on Campobello Island who must cross the border to access required goods and services or work in a New Brunswick health-care facility;
- c) A health-care worker who has travelled to another province to access health-care services or to accompany a family member requiring access to health-care services because the service is unavailable within NB.

Before a health-care worker leaves the province, they are required to advise their employer that they are leaving the province, the reason for their departure and their return date. Physicians are required to advise their Department Head and their Medical Director.

The employer or Medical Director must document the exception and direct their employees to travel directly to and

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from their destination/work/accommodation, follow all guidelines for infection prevention and control and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), self-monitor for symptoms, avoid close contact with vulnerable individuals (for whom they are not caring) and follow the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

2) Health-care workers who live in border communities and regularly commute to the province as an employee or as a member of the medical staff of a New Brunswick health-care facility are not required to self-isolate.

Employers and Medical Directors should remind these employees and physicians to avoid all non-essential travel in their home province, self-isolate at home as much as possible, travel directly to and from their destination/work/accommodation, self-monitor for symptoms, avoid close contact with vulnerable individuals (for whom you are not caring); and follow the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. If they develop symptoms, they should call 1-833-475-0724.

3) Short-term (less than 3 months), locums from outside the Maritime Provinces are permitted under the following conditions:

a) All options to recruit locums from within the province have been exhausted.

b) The RHA has an operational plan in place to support and manage these physicians for their first 14 days in the province. The plan must be approved by WorkSafeNB and include work isolation. They can only work in one facility during their first 14 days in the province.

c) Testing for COVID-19 should be considered for these individuals.

This directive also applies to short-term medical learners.

4) Administrators and managers of long-term care facilities are strongly encouraged to work with their employees to minimize the number of people working in more than one facility. This is to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 between facilities caring for individuals who are highly susceptible to the disease.

5) In a zone with an active outbreak in a hospital, long-term care facility or community transmission is occurring, employees of long-term care facilities may not work in more than one facility, whether or not they provide direct care to residents.

Please note:

a) A long-term care facility employee can be hired or transferred to another facility, but they must only work in their new facility.

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b) If a long-term care facility employee is working in a location where there are active cases of COVID-19, they must self-isolate for 14 days before working in another facility.

c) Long-term care workers cannot work in a hospital in a zone where there is an active outbreak in a hospital, long-term care facility or community transmission is occurring.

6) Employees of the regional health authorities and EM/ANB Inc. as well as medical staff who volunteer to work in a long-term care facility where there is an active outbreak are not automatically required to isolate upon their return to their usual workplace. The RHAs and EM/ANB will conduct a post deployment risk assessment to assess any incidents or breakdowns related to practices while they were at the residence. These individuals will be expected to practice 'work isolation' for 14 days following their last shift and will be tested for COVID-19 at Days 2, 5, and 10. The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health has developed guidelines for work isolation.

7) EM/ANB Inc. professionals and medical staff providing community care as part of their usual work activities are not required to self-isolate, whether or not there is an outbreak.

Employers are responsible for making sure that institutional policies and practices for infection prevention and control are

adhered to, including direction for continuous mask use. All health-care workers should be vigilant in completing self-assessments for any symptoms prior to every shift. Staff are also required to comply with all public health measures that are in place, including staying home if unwell and following direction from regional Public Health.

Facilities are required to continue to follow direction for visitors, including screening for symptoms prior to entering a facility.

These are very challenging and unprecedented times. Thank you for your continued collaboration as we work to protect our most vulnerable population.

The Pandemic Task Force