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COVID-19 Bulletin

A Letter From Horizon's CEO: Moncton Area Thank You

If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it's the importance of health care. The people of Moncton, and New Brunswick, rely on our team to be there for them in their time of need – often when they are most scared and vulnerable.

As the current outbreak continues and the Moncton area remains in the Orange Phase, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the swift response of our Horizon team. You pulled together, once again, when called to action. Thank you for everything you do to keep our patients and clients safe, and for supporting each other and our health care partners in

serving our community.

Our acute care teams and the COVID-19 Assessment Centre staff have quickly responded to the task at hand. Over the Thanksgiving weekend, assessment centre staff contacted the growing number of patients awaiting an assessment and completed a record number of swabs. As well, our phlebotomy team moved their clinic to a new site inside the Coliseum. This dedication does not go unnoticed. Thank you for stepping up during this busy time.

But they are not the only ones — every discipline and department have adjusted their focus. The Orange Phase means you may be temporarily isolated from friends and family who provide you strength and a much-needed break. For some, this may have really hit home over the Thanksgiving

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weekend. I encourage you to do what you can to take care of yourself and find ways to connect with loved ones safely and be there for one another.

Health care is certainly not an easy job, but I hope each of you finds comfort knowing you are helping others and your work is appreciated. Not only are you experiencing the same unknowns as the rest of the world, but you are doing it all while working to keep people safe and healthy.

Together, we will get through this, as we always do.

Sincerely,

Karen McGrath, President and CEO

Moncton area: phlebotomy changes at Moncton Coliseum

Patients who are scheduled for blood and specimen collection appointments at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital and Sackville Memorial Hospital should attend their appointment as planned.

The location change at the Moncton Coliseum applies ONLY to those who have appointments scheduled at the Moncton Coliseum.

Patients who are scheduled for blood and specimen collection appointments at the Moncton Coliseum are to proceed as usual to the white security tent in the main parking lot. Beginning today, security will direct patients to the back of the building where there will be a new designated parking lot and entrance for blood and specimen collection.



Patients who have appointments booked at the Moncton Coliseum will be notified of the location and directions when they book their appointment.

Miramichi area: CEO tour postponed

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in the Moncton and Campbellton areas, Karen McGrath, president and CEO, has postponed her CEO tour for the Miramichi area that were scheduled to take place this week.

Please stay tuned for an updated schedule.

Travel inside and outside of New Brunswick

As you are aware, the Government of New Brunswick made the decision last week to revert the Moncton (Zone 1) and Campbellton (Zone 5) areas to orange phase as a result of COVID-19 outbreaks in those areas.

As part of the communication from GNB, citizens of New Brunswick were cautioned against non-essential and non-emergency travel out of the Moncton and Campbellton areas. Travel from these zones into other zones is not recommended unless for emergency or essential requirements.

Those who choose to do so are required to follow Public Health guidelines for the 14 days upon return:

- wear a mask at all times when in public, indoors, and outdoors for the next 14 days;
- be vigilant in self-monitoring for symptoms and get tested as soon as possible should they develop;

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- limit your contacts to your two-household bubble;
- wash your hands or use sanitizer frequently;
- maintain a two-metre distance from others; and
- avoid gatherings.

Horizon's screening questionnaires for employees and physicians and the public have been updated to reflect travel to the Moncton and Campbellton areas. Symptomatic individuals with travel to Moncton and Campbellton are **not** permitted in Horizon facilities.

Employees and physicians must contact Employee Health and Wellness (1-833-978-2580) for further direction.

Furthermore, all **non-patient care related work travel is cancelled** until further notice.

Employees and physicians must disclose to their manager all travel outside of the Atlantic provinces bubble and a plan must be in place to ensure 14-day self-isolation upon return.

Employees and physicians are required to answer truthfully the screening questions prior to entering the workplace daily. Failing to answer the questions truthfully, or failing to disclose travel outside of the Atlantic Provinces bubble, will result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

The second wave of COVID-19 is upon us. The health and safety of our staff and our patients depends on our personal vigilance and adherence to direction from Public Health.

Mandatory masks

The Government of New Brunswick made it mandatory for every New Brunswicker to wear a face masks upon entry to public buildings. Like similar prior directive, this directive applies to all Horizon facilities and includes all Horizon employees and physicians.

Recent communications to our staff and physicians about wearing masks have yielded positive results and we are grateful for your compliance. However, as Horizon is addressing the second wave of the pandemic we must ensure that we do not become complacent and relax our mask usage.

Wearing a mask is an expectation of all Horizon employees and physicians, regardless of whether they are in their department or units.

Unless an employee or physician is alone in an office, masks must be worn at all times, regardless of whether two metres of physical distancing can be maintained. Note: This is a change to practice where previously employees and physicians could have removed their masks if two metres of physical distancing could be maintained.

Masks must be worn properly and must cover your **entire mouth and nose**.

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Employees and physicians who are eating are not expected to wear a mask, however, they must ensure that they are seated at least two meters away from anyone else.

Hallways and elevators are not appropriate eating areas and the exception for mask wearing while eating does not apply in these locations.

With your continued diligence, we hope to lessen the impact of the second wave on you and on our patients and clients.

Thank you in advance for your adherence to these important requirements.

Leave entitlement related to COVID-19 absences

For the past few months, Horizon has been planning for the anticipated second wave of COVID-19 this Fall. Many of the measures put in place during the first wave this past spring were done in quick reaction to a sudden emergency event. We now all (Horizon, government, businesses, employers, members of the public, etc.) have the benefit of more planning time and more knowledge leading into a second wave.

This Fall will look very different compared to last Spring. By following WorkSafeNB's guidelines and the guidance from Public Health, Horizon has put in place the necessary measures to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19.

A number of employees and managers have asked about leave entitlement related to COVID-19 absences. As a tool to help you navigate the pandemic, here is a [guide to the application of leave provisions](#) in a number of scenarios that you may encounter over

the next months involving yourself or your dependents. Please review it carefully. If you have any questions, please consult your manager or Human Resources.

In cases where the employees must miss time from work and a suitable alternate arrangement cannot be made, employees will need to use, in accordance with normal practice, the various leaves available to them in their applicable collective agreement or non-bargaining policy.

Adult Residential Facility Patients

Adult residential facilities (special care homes) are an important resource and home to some of our most vulnerable New Brunswickers. Physicians working in ARFs are working with them to establish and strengthen clinical support, as well as, implementing a robust health care approach for vulnerable patients living in these facilities.

To that end, we ask the following:

Please ensure that all your patients in adult residential facilities have up to date advance care directives in place.

If you are concerned about a patient living in an adult residential facility, please contact the EMP Care Coordination Centre at 1-844-982-7367 (or the local EMP unit, if the patient is already admitted to EMP) for a clinical assessment and COVID-19 testing, if required. Please do not send patients to the emergency department unless absolutely necessary.

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Operators of adult residential facilities and Physicians can also contact EMP directly for clinical concerns about residents and have been asked to facilitate the completion of advance care directives for residents, ensuring they are up-to-date and can be readily accessed. You are key to ensuring we are able to address the needs of our senior population, EMP can assist you and the operators with this process as required.

Regional Outbreak Declared in Campbellton and Moncton

Based on a provincial risk assessment, health zone 5 (Campbellton region) along with zone 1 (Moncton region) transitioned to Orange level under the province's COVID-19 recovery plan.

Health care providers are advised to be on high-alert for any patients exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 and to implement the appropriate infection prevention and control measures, including proper use of personal protective equipment. In orange level, anyone with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should self-isolate and be referred for testing.

It is imperative that health-care providers also actively self-monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and stay home when sick, even if symptoms are mild. Please ensure you closely and consistently follow health care and long-term care facility guidance regarding continuous masking and other established infection control measures.

The fastest way for health-care providers to access testing is to request a test online by visiting the Government of New Brunswick's coronavirus website. Tests can also be arranged by calling Tele-Care 811.

Health-care providers at long-term care facilities are reminded that suspect COVID-19 patients should be assessed and tested on-site whenever possible instead of transferring to a hospital for assessment in order to contain the spread of the virus. At nursing homes, swabs are done on-site by nursing staff. At adult residential facilities, swabs are done on-site by Extra-Mural Program staff and ANB paramedic.

As you are aware, COVID-19 results are required to be reported under the *Reporting and Diseases Regulation under the Public Health Act*, orally within one hour after identification, followed by a written report by the end of the next working day.

Immunization in Orange Phase

We are currently experiencing cases and outbreaks resulting in zone one and five in the province going from yellow to orange phase. As per the recovery phase document, being in the orange recovery phase still allows for continuation of health care services such as offering the flu vaccine.

It is extremely important that flu vaccine clinics continue in all areas of the province including these regions to ensure the population is immunized against influenza. Influenza vaccine is

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one of the key measures available to help protect New Brunswickers from becoming ill and prevent the health care system from being overwhelmed.

Immunizing in the presence of COVID does add extra risk and the need to ensure the appropriate strategies are in place to protect everyone. Please continue to use the appropriate PPE and other measures as per the guidance document to ensure lowest risk while immunizing.

Admissions to nursing homes and adult residential facilities

The Department of Social Development has advised that admissions to nursing homes and adult residential facilities are to continue in all zones.

However, please note that effective immediately all admissions, re-admissions and transfers to nursing homes and adult residential facilities located in the Moncton (Zone 1) and Campbellton (Zone 5) areas should be placed on isolation with droplet contact precautions for 14 days unless otherwise directed by the medical officer of health.

This includes admissions (re-admissions) from hospitals and community and transfers between long-term care facilities.

SNB Kronos Upgrade Outage Notification

A major Kronos update is planned for Oct. 27 to 29.



During this period, Workforce ESP / Timekeeper applications will not be available.

More details including the downtime period will be communicated in the coming weeks. Thank you for your collaboration.

GNB Update

Public Health reported six new cases of COVID-19 today and declared an outbreak at Manoir de la Sagesse, a special-care home in Campbellton.

There are five cases in Zone 5 (Campbellton region) and one new case in Zone 1 (Moncton region). The current number of active cases is 82.