

Bulletin #91: COVID-19 Information

November 30, 2020



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COVID-19 Bulletin

Thank you from Horizon's CEO

As November comes to a close and our province continues to respond to the ever-changing COVID-19 situation with new guidelines, directives and restrictions, I wanted to take to this time to commend you for your ongoing commitment to keeping our patients and clients safe, and for your resilience as you adapt to increasing demands and changes, especially as we transitioned to the Orange level in Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton.

I know it isn't easy, and you may be feeling anxious about the rapid changes and uncertainties of this second wave; these feelings are normal and to be expected. COVID-19 is serious and we should be concerned, but we should also take some

comfort from the many lessons learned from the first wave of the virus. Various measures have been put in place to help ensure our system does not become overwhelmed and that you have the additional support and resources you need to do your jobs safely and effectively.

Every discipline and department within Horizon have adjusted their focus and we are using every available resource to meet the challenges of this second wave head-on. The time and effort put into this work does not go unnoticed, and I hope you are as proud as I am of your sacrifices and your accomplishments.

With most of us living and working within the Orange level, this means many of you are temporarily isolated from friends and family who provide you strength and a much-needed break. I encourage you to do what you can to take care of yourself and find ways to connect with loved ones safely.

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I also want to remind you of the many resources available to support you. You can access support services on Skyline's [Employee Health and Wellness](#) page and through [this list of resources](#), specific to COVID-19. I hope each of you finds comfort knowing you are helping others and that your work is appreciated.

Holiday decorating contest

As the holiday season approaches, Horizon is pleased to share that we will once again be holding a [Holiday Tree Decorating Contest](#) with virtual voting.

We know, in previous years, many teams have taken great pride and demonstrated their creativity through decorating doors, cubicles, hallways, etc.

This year, as we continue to follow all guidelines from Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC), and work to ensure that our facilities remain clean, provide easy access for cleaning and remain free of clutter, Horizon employees and physicians are asked to limit their departmental / unit holiday decorating to one tree only.

When decorating your unit / departmental tree, it will be important to ensure that masks are worn, proper hand hygiene

is followed, and that appropriate physical distancing is maintained.

Entry forms can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your on-going support of the many ways Horizon is working to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Long-term care pandemic staffing

New Brunswickers need your help. We have navigated the pandemic successfully to date. COVID-19 is still with us, however, and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Everyone will have a role to play to maintain our effective response. This means ensuring New Brunswickers can continue having access to critical services.

During the first wave hundreds of individuals stepped up by temporarily working in different roles or teams to keep critical services going. We are looking to employees to lend their skills to support critical services if needed during the second wave.

If you are able and willing, we are looking for volunteers to establish a pool of employees ready for deployment as personal support workers in long-term care facilities if the need occurs. You will be trained so you will be able to contribute confidently.

As a volunteer, you will receive personal support worker training, at no cost to you, offered by New Brunswick's

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community colleges. Most of the training will be offered online followed by an in-person component (the location of the in-person component will be determined depending on the number and location of volunteers). The training will include how to provide resident care services (such as feeding, clothing, bathing, and toileting); infection prevention and control; personal protective equipment; and CPR.

Volunteers will be provided leave with pay for the duration of the assignment, meaning you will continue receiving your regular bi-weekly pay.

Please discuss this matter with your supervisor before confirming your interest. If you have been approved by your manager to participate in this initiative please email Daniel Robichaud, regional manager labour relations at Daniel.Robichaud@HorizonNB.ca by Dec. 14. Please title the subject line: Long-term care pandemic staffing.

There may be other operational areas that will need our support. When those requests come please consider how you can help. Working together and contributing where we can will be critical to successfully responding to COVID-19. Thank you so much for your ongoing efforts.

Face masks for health care workers use during COVID-19

Last week, the Regional Infectious Diseases Infection Prevention and Control (ID-IPC) COVID-19 Committee updated the guidance related to Horizon's [face mask for health care](#)

[workers use during COVID-19](#). These updates reflect research on best practices and Health Canada recommendations related to personal protective equipment (PPE).

The update ensures all health care workers (HCW) in Horizon facilities have access to the mask required for their working conditions. Currently, some HCWs are using a Level 3 mask when an approved Level 1 mask meets standards.

Prior to this change, a variety of different masks were being used across the organization, some of which no longer meet current standards.

We have not downgraded PPE for employees and physicians.

Now all HCWs are supplied with American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) masks. Health Canada and the World Health Organization advise that ASTM level face masks (1 to 3) are fluid resistant medical grade face masks and are safe for use when providing care to suspect / confirmed COVID-19 patients.

All masks worn across the organization now meet the specifications required by the ASTM standards and are accessible to HCWs to be used for the proper indication following the HCW's Point of Care Risk Assessment.

The protective level of the mask required for each situation will continue to be available. When Level 2 or 3 medical face masks are required for higher risk procedures such as Operating

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Room Theatres, the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Units and some outpatient clinics (Ambulatory care), they will be available.

Any face masks in stock in Horizon facilities that do not meet the ASTM standards are now considered non-medical face coverings.

Horizon's ID-IPC COVID-19 Committee is working diligently to ensure Horizon's practices continue align with evolving national standards and other jurisdictions across the country.

Your safety and the safety of our patients and communities has been and remains Horizon's number one focus.

Thank you for your continued diligence, as we work through the ongoing outbreak. We know proper mask use and hand hygiene are instrumental in the fight against COVID-19.

If you have any questions about accessing PPE, please contact your manager.

GNB Update

Public Health reported six new cases of COVID-19 today, has declared the outbreak at the Oasis Residence in Dieppe over, and on Sunday, Nov. 29, a positive case of COVID-19 was confirmed at Harrison Trimble High School in Moncton. The school community has been notified.



Reminder: Horizon all-user email distribution lists

As was circulated in [Bulletin #7b – COVID-19 – All User Distribution List – Mar 22 2020](#), we want to ensure all Horizon staff and physicians receive communications sent via all-user email distribution lists.

It has come to our attention, recently, that not all employees are receiving these emails, therefore the following processes have been identified to address this issue.

Any user not receiving all user email communications should take the following steps to ensure they are promptly added to appropriate distribution list:

- Send an email to service@snb.ca with the following information:
 - a) **Subject line:** All-user email lists – COVID-19 – [employee name]
 - b) **Email body:** User email address, primary work area

These requests will be treated with high priority and users will be added to the proper distribution list as soon as possible.

Managers must request that new hires be added to the proper all user email distribution list, specific to their zone.

If anyone hears of a colleague not receiving all user emails, please share the above process with them.

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If you encounter any difficulties, please contact the service desk for assistance: service@SNB.ca or 1-844-354-4357.

New Microsoft Office 365 advanced threat protection

Because of the increasing level of risk in information technology, SNB Technology Services have made a significant investment this year to acquire a number of systems and products to improve the security posture at GNB. Many of these systems are in place now or are being implemented.

Recently however, several new threats and vulnerabilities have been identified and require immediate attention. Surveillance agencies and federal authorities have been warning GNB and other jurisdictions about increased activity and possible on-going threats to our services.

Technology Services is pleased to announce that it is currently in the process of rolling out a new cybersecurity protection tool powered by Microsoft Office 365 ahead of another anticipated wave of email viruses currently spreading.

This tool will protect email sent to the regional health authorities email accounts. If this tool discovers a threat in an email or attachment, it will remove the offending part, and a note will appear in its place, advising the user of the removal.

Technology Services do not expect problems with the roll-out of this protection system, however any concerns should be raised to the IT Service Desk and will be addressed by the Infrastructure Application team.