



COVID-19 Update

Date: Saturday, March 28, 2020
To: Everyone at HHS
From: Rob Maclsaac, President and CEO
Subject: **Our current state**

Our hospital is facing the challenge of our lifetime as the COVID-19 pandemic takes hold in our region.

Our planning predicts high numbers of patients requiring hospital care in the weeks and months ahead, with many needing critical care for extended periods of time. Based on our projections, we're well prepared to take on the first wave of patient admissions. Through the hard work and sacrifice of many people, we have reduced our occupancy, making enough room for a significant influx of COVID-19 patients. Thank you to all who have helped to achieve this important step.

We don't know exactly how intense this pandemic will be for our community. Information about the virus in our community changes daily. We are working hard to keep information flowing to our frontline workers and physicians as quickly and effectively as possible. I know it is difficult to keep track of it all, but please make every effort to stay on top of the information we are putting out daily – it is critical for your safety and that of our patients.

I also know there is a lot of concern about personal protective equipment. We are working around the clock to secure as much of the equipment and supplies needed now, and in the weeks to come, to keep our people and our patients safe. Unfortunately, there is an overwhelming demand in Ontario and around the world for PPE and other critical medical supplies and equipment. If you watch the daily news, you are seeing this play out everywhere.

It simply hasn't been possible to secure as much of these items as we'd like. But we are exploring every possible avenue, both conventional and unconventional, to acquire more PPE. And we are having some success. This includes generous donations from community leaders who had PPE stockpiles as part of their business inventories. We have also approached local manufacturers to see if they could retool their factories to produce PPE for us. We'll continue all these efforts.

In the meantime, our current inventories of PPE are extremely precious. We have to conserve them because there could still be a long road ahead. This means carefully rationing the use and reuse of our available supplies but doing so always using the best available science to support our decisions. This is the most responsible approach we can take at this time, until new options are available that guarantee us a robust supply.

I expect there will be times in the weeks and months ahead when we struggle to keep going. It is impossible for any of us to completely separate this workplace challenge from our personal lives. As much as our vocations unite us in purpose, we are also just people – worried and anxious for our own families and futures just like the patients and families we serve.

We can all take comfort in knowing that we are heading into this challenge with some of the most talented, educated, experienced, and passionate people on the planet forming the HHS team. If I know anything, it's that our best shot in meeting this unprecedented situation is in acting as a team. We will get through this by supporting each other in every aspect of our daily mission.

Our community needs us in this moment. They are relying on our expertise, and our professionalism, even as it is tested like never before.

I'm confident we're up to the challenge.

Rob
