

COVID-19 Update

Date: Friday, April 24, 2020

To: Everyone at HHS

From: Kelly Campbell, VP, Corporate Services and Capital Development
Kirsten Krull, VP, Quality and Performance & CNE
Leslie Gauthier, VP, Clinical Support Services and Surgery

Subject: **PPE Update – Building on our conservation successes**

Over the last few weeks, we have taken steps to ensure a sustainable supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) across HHS. Thanks to everyone's collaboration and good will, we have now [largely stabilized the state of PPE supplies](#).

PPE Updates

- Universal masking in place to protect staff on entry at all sites.
- No further expansion of conservation measures but extended use and same day re-use continues.
- Standard PPE (masks, N95s, gowns, gloves, eye protection) are available, so PPE brought from home is not necessary at this time.
- PPE supplies on units/wards are being provided based on [appropriate PPE requirements](#).

Building on conservation successes

One of the results of the conservation efforts is the move to universal masking for everyone and, starting today, the handout of a mask to all staff and physicians when they enter any HHS clinical site. This will help to reduce the spread of COVID-19 between HHS staff, physicians and patients.

It's important that any mask be donned at the entrance, worn properly and fully cover the mouth and nose. Ensure to wash your hands before and after [donning or doffing the mask](#).

At this time, we will NOT be adding conservation measures. Current practices continue:

- Extended use of masks (and eye protection as needed based on a [Point of Care Risk Assessment](#) or PCRA)
- Same day re-use of masks (and eye protection as needed based on a PCRA).
- Surgical masks and N95 respirators collection where this is already happening as a precaution should we need to reprocess and recirculate them if supplies are uncertain again.
 - We are not recirculating reprocessed masks, and are not moving to multi-day reuse at this time.

Personal PPE

Because of the availability of standard PPE (N95s, masks, gloves, eye protection and gowns), staff or physicians should not bring in these PPEs or equivalents from home. Personal goggles need to be washed at the end of a shift and can be brought from home if preferred.

Homemade surgical caps are not considered standard PPE, but are a personal choice that staff can continue to use if washed prior to each shift.

Maintaining our gains

To help protect our colleagues and patients, we are reminded to :

- Perform [appropriate hand hygiene](#).
- Strictly adhere to [physical distancing](#) rules (especially at cafes/cafeterias and during smoke breaks, and when entering and exiting the building if unmasked)
- Don a mask upon entering the building until exiting the building (unless more than 2m away from any co-workers – such as in a private office)

PPE stocks

Over the past several weeks, the flow and type of PPE products have varied because of the more varied vendors who supply HHS. We are assessing the PPE stock in each unit to ensure they are of the appropriate standard required for the nature of the work and health and safety of our staff. We may therefore swap, augment or remove some products to align with these standards.

The logistics measures DO NOT change processes regarding access to PPE needed for additional precautions, such as when aerosol generating medical procedures are conducted. Health care workers should always conduct PCRA's with each anticipated patient encounter to determine PPE requirements for a given task.

To help manage distribution and availability of supplies across the organization, logistics/PPE supply attendants will again ask unit /departmental leaders to identify any stocks of PPE that may be stored in unconventional locations.

We congratulate everyone for their work in helping us ensure the availability of supplies and reduce the transmission of COVID-19.
