Hamilton Health Sciences

COVID-19 Update

Date:	Thursday, April 23, 2020
To:	Everyone at St. Peter's Hospital
From:	Kim Alvarado, Director, Oncology, Critical Care & Palliative Care Program Dr. Dominik Mertz, Medical Director, Infection Prevention and Control
Subject:	**UPDATE - Outbreak at St. Peter's Hospital**

NEW UPDATE

On Monday April 20, in consultation with Hamilton Public Health Services, a Covid-19 outbreak was declared on the 3 West Palliative Care Unit at St. Peter's Hospital after a patient tested positive for the virus.

We conducted testing of all patients on 3 West and 3 East and are finishing testing of all health care workers on these units regardless of symptomatology to identify potential COVID-19 carriers and to better understand the potential extent of the outbreak.

One other patient and a total of three healthcare workers on 3 West have tested positive to date.

The 3 West Palliative Care Unit, and out of an abundance of caution, the 3 East Palliative Care are now closed to admissions. Both units are being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Where appropriate, we are also informing family members to ensure that they are kept apprised of the safety measures we are taking.

SELF-MONITORING and SURVEILLANCE

All healthcare workers should be vigilant in self-monitoring and assessing patients for symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms may include fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, inability to detect smells (anosmia), headache, muscle aches, nausea or diarrhea.

If a patient develops symptoms, staff should:
- Initiate droplet/contact precautions

- Submit NPS swab for testing (meditech mnemonic: **COVID19**)
- Notify Infection Control and Prevention of symptomatic patients and positive results.

Staff members and physicians must self-screen daily for COVID-19 symptoms. Those who exhibit signs and symptoms of respiratory illness should **notify Employee Health Services** immediately and stay at home.

Staff are reminded to adhere to universal masking while on clinical wards, and to be mindful of their unmasked exposure during breaks. When not masked, please remember to maintain physical distancing.

Universal face masking to contain droplets and secretions of the wearer also protects the wearer from exposure of droplets from others (co-workers and patients).

Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth and worn appropriately for extended use and care taken to reduce risk of self-contamination:
- <u>DO NOT allow mask to hang or dangle around the neck.</u>
- Change mask if it becomes wet.
- Clean hands after removing the mask
- Remove mask correctly without touching the outside of the mask and discard into waste receptacle.

Other reminders:
- Practice proper hand hygiene and cough etiquette at all times.
- Do not consume food in clinical areas.
- Perform a PCRA to determine when you may need to add other components of PPE. including eye protection, gloves, and gowns.

COVID-19 is more prevalent in the community than in the healthcare system at this time. That is why it is critical that staff mask and perform effective hand hygiene to protect themselves from exposures from patients and co-workers.

For more information, speak with an employee health nurse or infection control practitioner. It is extremely important that we all do what we can to help protect our patients and colleagues.

Thank you for your attention and support of this important matter.