

Pembroke Regional Hospital

MEMO

To: All Staff and Physicians
From: Infectious Disease Command Centre
Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2025
Subject: Enhanced Masking Requirements

Due to an increase in the prevalence and rate of hospital-acquired infections, respiratory illness infection rates within the community, and among our health care workers, PRH will be implementing targeted masking protocols effective immediately.

In order to reduce the risk of health care-associated transmission of respiratory illnesses, masking using a procedure/ surgical mask will now be required for the following situations:

1. For staff and physicians, at all times within the Emergency Department;
2. For patients (who are able) and visitors, at all times in the Emergency Department and Emergency Department waiting room;
3. Outside of the Emergency Department, in all clinical areas, everyone is required to wear a mask when interacting with patients. This includes anyone visiting a patient, providing care, or transporting a patient.
4. Masks are not required in public areas such as hallways, elevators, other waiting rooms/ areas, cafeteria, and café but are available for anyone who prefers to wear one.

As a reminder, if you are feeling unwell, masks are required at all times while in the hospital. Please notify the Occupational Health and Safety Team at ext. 8200 to discuss your situation and a plan for a safe return to work.

We appreciate that this is a challenging situation. However, implementing masking protocols is an important tool to mitigate transmission and keep our staff, physicians, patients, and community safe and healthy. Using a targeted approach to masking will help mitigate the spread of respiratory viruses due to transmission of illness from unrecognized cases (e.g., asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic).

We will continue to monitor respiratory illness trends within the hospital and community and reassess this requirement when appropriate.

If you have general questions, please speak with your unit manager/ delegate.

Questions related to masking and patients can be directed to a member of the IPAC team, ext 7106 or 7108 or by email InfectionControl@prh.email

Questions related to health care worker masking can be directed to a member of the Occupational Health Team, ext 8200 or by email OccHealth@prh.email