

IMPORTANT UPDATES ON COVID-19

To: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, and Midwives
Hospital Infection Control Departments and Emergency Departments

Updated recommendations on personal protective equipment and the isolation of exposed healthcare workers is included in this document.

1. [Interim IPAC Recommendations for Use of Personal Protective Equipment for Care of Individuals with Suspect or Confirmed COVID-19 \(December 15, 2021\)](#) / [French version](#)

Updates include:

- The interim recommended PPE when providing direct care for patients with suspect or confirmed COVID-19 includes a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator (or equivalent or greater protection), eye protection, gown, and gloves.
- Other appropriate PPE includes a well-fitted surgical/procedure (medical) mask, or non-fit tested respirator, eye protection, gown and gloves for direct care of patients with suspect or confirmed COVID-19.
- A summary of the recommendations can be found in a chart beginning on page 10.
- Please note that the Ministry of Health's Directive 5 is the provincial baseline standard for provision of PPE for hospitals, long-term care homes and retirement homes during COVID-19.

2. **COVID-19 Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge (Version 2.0- December 15, 2021)** (attached)

Form updated to include the following:

- All high-risk contacts associated with the high-risk setting of the case must self-isolate for 10 days (regardless of vaccination status or previous positive status) and be tested in accordance with the [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance](#).
- High-Risk Settings include:
 - Hospitals and healthcare settings
 - Congregate living settings
 - Elementary School, Middle School or Secondary School
 - Child Care Centres, Camps
- **Management of critical Staffing Shortages:** If the high-risk contact is a staff member in a health care or congregate living setting, and they are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated, they may work under self-isolation as per the [COVID-19 Provincial Testing and Clearance Guidance](#) if clinical care would be severely compromised without additional staffing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local Timiskaming Health Unit:

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8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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