



## Memo from the Chief of Staff and President/CEO to ALL Staff

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Date: Updated May 20, 2020

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Some recent studies have started to show that there is a possibility that individuals with COVID-19 who lack symptoms can possibly transmit the virus to others before even showing symptoms. We are continuously refreshing our organizational risk assessment to ensure that we have implemented the appropriate health and safety control measures to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. Since community spread is now a reality and new evidence reveals that pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can possibly spread coronavirus we **will be implementing a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Matrix (see below)**, which will come in effect tomorrow, April 11, 2020. While this is primarily a safety practice, it is also about PPE preservation for the future. Based on this matrix, WRH has approximately 4 weeks' worth of PPE supplies because we have been diligent in the use of PPE. I want you to know that PPE is a top priority for WRH, as well as the other hospitals in our region. We are working together to get the required supply of PPE to our region. The Incident management response team will continue to monitor our PPE supply and remain transparent with staff. Thank you so much for your diligence. It matters.

In addition to this, all patient facing staff have been issued a Face shield that is personally theirs to keep and will have their name on it. Additional face shields are available if you did not receive one or require a new one. Any safety glasses/goggles that are provided to staff are to be kept for the duration of the pandemic and is their responsibility to maintain.

We ask all staff to do the following with respect to your face shield:

- Please disinfect and clean the face shield with any hospital grade disinfectant wipes (i.e. Clorox hydrogen peroxide, Clorox bleach and CaviWipes are all effective) when required
- Please take your Face shield home with you at the end of the shift (i.e. locker, leave in car).
- Please note you can wear you Face shield outside of patient rooms.

The below PPE matrix identifies who should be wearing what type of PPE and when they should be wearing it. Please read it carefully. Should you have any questions please contact IPAC.

## COVID-19 PPE Matrix

### PPE Level: Medium Risk

Justification	PPE Requirements	Notes	Positions (Including but not limited to)
<p>1. Employee travels throughout the facility (including patient care areas) without direct patient contact.</p>	<p>1. Employees Issued 1 procedure mask per day by the screeners upon entrance to the building .</p>	<p>1. When doffing your mask, do so using the ear loops or ties. Do not touch the mask itself.                      2. When re-donning your mask, do so using the ear loops or ties.                      3. ALWAYS perform hand hygiene BEFORE and AFTER donning and doffing.</p> <p>With regards to the masks that have been given, do not contaminate the inside of your mask. Please lay mask dirty side/outside down on a clean paper towel and place another piece on top.</p>	<p>All Staff</p>

### PPE Level: High Risk

Justification	PPE Requirements	Notes	Positions (Including but not limited to)
<p>1. Direct patient contact                      2. This includes suspect COVID-19 patients.</p>	<p>1. Employee will be issued 1 procedure masks per day.                      2. Employee will be issued 1 reusable plastic face shield. This will be worn during all patient contact.                      3. Gowns will be utilized as per current IPAC regulations.                      4. Gloves will be worn at all times and changed after all patient contact.</p>	<p>1. Label your face shield with your name. This is yours to keep and clean for the duration of the pandemic.                      2. If goggles or shield are visibly soiled, clean first with hydrogen peroxide wipe and then water.                      3. When doffing your mask, do so using the ear loops or ties. Do not touch the mask itself.                      4. When re-donning your mask, do so using the ear loops or ties.                      5. Store your face shield in a secure location to prevent damage (i.e. home, locker, leave in car).                      6. ALWAYS perform hand hygiene BEFORE and AFTER donning and doffing.</p>	<p>1. Front line care healthcare providers (including professional staff)                      2. Pharmacy (Pharmacist working directly with patients)                      3. Environmental Services/Housekeepers (employees working in patient care areas)                      4. Security (responding to Code White's and PAL's where direct patient contact is likely/ dealing with external individual risks)                      5. Lab                      6. Spiritual Care                      7. Social Work                      8. Transporters while transporting suspect and/or positive COVID-19 patients</p>

### PPE Level: Very High Risk

Justification	PPE Requirements	Notes	Positions (Including but not limited to)
<p>1. Direct patient contact including suspect patients <b>and</b>;                      2. Any aerosol-generating procedure (High Flow Oxygen Therapy (AIRVO), mechanical ventilation, Nocturnal CPAP or BiPAP or:                      2. Tracheostomy procedures (e.g., open suctioning, removal) or:                      3. Code Blue respirations and airway management including Intubation</p>	<p>In addition to the level 3 PPE requirements outlined above;                      1. N95 mask supply will be provided on all necessary units and within Code Blue carts.                      2. Departmental Managers will be responsible to arrange for replenishment of depleted N95 stock on units.</p>		<p>1. Nursing and professional staff performing high risk procedures                      2. Respiratory Therapist performing high risk procedures                      3. Front line medical staff responding to Code Blue's</p>

## N95 & Procedure/Procedure Mask Retention

The Ministry has asked that all organizations keep their used N95 and Procedure/Procedure masks, in the event that we move to reprocessing masks. We are asking all staff that wear a mask to place them into the designated box that are on each inpatient unit. If the mask is damaged or soiled, those masks can be discarded when no longer required. There is one (1) individual personal bag for masks.

Any questions, please direct them to IPAC, your manager or the managers on site/on call.

### FAQs

#### 1. Why are the screeners considered low risk?

- A. Members of our screening team do not have patient contact. If a member of our screening team would like to wear a homemade mask, then WRH will provide them with one. It is important to note that Public Health Agency Canada recommends only wearing a cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g. grocery stores and pharmacies). At WRH, the safety and security of all individuals has and will remain a top priority. Social distancing (6 feet of distance) has been established at the screening areas, along with plexiglass stations to ensure both the screener and the staff member being screened are being protected.

[https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing\\_Non\\_Medical\\_Mask.pdf](https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing_Non_Medical_Mask.pdf)

#### 2. I am a member of administration but I go out to the units; shouldn't I be wearing a mask?

- A. If you are an employee who travels throughout the facility (including patient care areas) and do not have direct patient contact then you should have received a mask. You should be following the instructions found in PPE Level Medium Risk

**3. I am a member of Environmental Services/Housekeeping and I did not receive a mask but my colleague in ES/Housekeeping did. Why is that?**

- A. It is likely that you work in a non-patient area and your colleague works in a patient area. To confirm this, you should connect with your supervisor/manager.

**4. What is deemed “appropriate use” of homemade masks?**

- A. If you are deemed to be in the low risk category and you would like to wear a cloth mask in the workplace, you are welcome to do so. You have been provided two cloth masks to use. If your job takes you on the patient units or in a patient room the expectation is that you will follow proper PPE.

[https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing\\_Non\\_Medical\\_Mask.pdf](https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing_Non_Medical_Mask.pdf)

It is important to note that the Public Health Agency Canada recommends only wearing a cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g. grocery stores and pharmacies). Cloth Face Covering should:

- Fit comfortably but snugly against the side of your face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to the shape

These cloth face coverings may slow the spread of the virus. If you have the virus and do not have symptoms wearing the mask could stop you from unknowingly spreading the virus to others. To clean a cloth face covering please do the following:

- Wash the face cover
- A washing machine will work to properly wash a face covering

When removing the cloth face covering, be careful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth when removing your face covering and wash hands immediately after removing. Finally, DO NOT place face coverings on children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

[https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing\\_Non\\_Medical\\_Mask.pdf](https://www.wrh.on.ca/uploads/Coronavirus/Wearing_Non_Medical_Mask.pdf)

## 5. When will I receive my face shield?

- A. Face shields have been already issued. All face shields will be labelled. If you did not receive a face shield, please contact your manager. Should your face shield become damage, please see your departmental manager or the manager on site.

## 6. Can you provide shoe covers?

- A. As previously communicated, for those working in high-risk environments (like in an acute care setting), Dr. Michael Gardam, an infectious disease physician and Chief of Staff at Toronto's Humber River Hospital, recommends washing clothing as soon as you get home, and wearing comfortable clothes to work that can be cleaned easily. Shoe covers are not necessary. Staff should consider the following:
- Avoid items that cannot be easily washed, like ties or other hand-wash only items.
  - Avoid wearing your outside shoes inside the home
  - Wash your hands upon entry and after changing clothing items
  - Self-monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath)
  - Stay home, if possible, when you're off-shift and avoid visitors
  - Keep a 2-meter distance if you are in a room with others
  - Keep surfaces clean and disinfected
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water. Dry your hands with a paper towel or cloth towel that no one else will share.
  - Sources:
    - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
    - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>