



# Ontario Health

To: Hospital CEOs

From: Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health

Date: May 28, 2020

Re: Reprocessing of N95 Respirators

As you know, we continue to work hard with the Ministry of Health to procure PPE to augment and sustain supply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In parallel, we are working to enable PPE conservation, including through evidence-based recommendations to the field. These conservation activities are essential to our response efforts as securing an ongoing supply of N95s continues to be a challenge worldwide.

As I shared in a letter to you in April, when we asked you to begin collecting used N95 respirators and to safely store them for future sterilization, Health Canada has assured Canadians that N95 respirators can be safely reprocessed (please see [here](#)). To support jurisdictions to increase their N95 respirator reprocessing capacity, Health Canada has also donated a number of approved machines to Ontario and other provinces. We have facilitated the allocation of these machines across the province.

With this support, Ontario is now moving ahead with its preparedness plan to begin the reprocessing of N95s in the event they are ever needed.

Starting in June, five hospitals across Ontario with excess capacity to reprocess N95 respirators will begin reprocessing on behalf of the province. The N95s reprocessed at each of these hub sites will be stored in the provincial pandemic supply. At this time, the purpose of this plan is only to build a stockpile of reprocessed N95s. Hospitals are not to introduce the use of reprocessed N95 respirators for patient care or worker health and safety, and are required to continue to follow applicable Directives from the Chief Medical of Health (CMOH) on the use of PPE, including Directive 5. The Ministry of Health would only approve and direct the use of reprocessed N95s in the event of a severe shortage and in consultation with affected employers and labour unions.

To carry out this plan, we need your help. Please continue to collect and safely store your used N95 respirators - those that are not visibly soiled or damaged should be collected and stored in disposal receptacles that are clearly labelled, dated, and separated from other types of PPE. Ontario Health will provide a service to collect used N95 respirators from your organization for the purpose of reprocessing at one of the hub sites. For information on having used N95 respirators picked up from your organization for the purpose of reprocessing, please email us at [OH\\_PPereprocessing@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:OH_PPereprocessing@ontariohealth.ca).

If you have in-house capacity to reprocess N95 respirators on behalf of your own organization, please begin reprocessing using Health Canada-approved machinery, following manufacturer guidelines, and storing reprocessed N95s safely. The same requirements concerning all applicable Directives, as noted above, apply to reprocessing on behalf of your own organization.

Ontario Health is establishing a reprocessing community of practice to support staff training, best practices, standards, and quality across all hospitals. A [webinar for all hospitals](#) to learn more about safely reprocessing N95s is also scheduled for June 10<sup>th</sup>. I hope your team will tune in. In the meantime, [here is a link to frequently asked questions](#) about reprocessing that were developed with input and guidance from experts.

Implementing this plan to reprocess N95 respirators and having them in the event they are needed, will strengthen our collective pandemic response and will help ensure the protection of health care workers, patients and families. As always, thank you for your ongoing efforts and commitment to the work we are accomplishing together.

Matthew Anderson