

Pembroke Regional Hospital

MEMO

To: All Staff and Physicians
From: Infection Prevention and Control & Occupational Health and Safety
Date: Friday, September 15, 2023
Subject: Masking Changes

While our organizational indicators for COVID-19 have not yet shown a drastic increase, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) has reported that COVID-19 activity within the community has been trending upward.

In alignment with regional hospitals and based on indicator trends within our community, Pembroke Regional Hospital (PRH) is returning to universal masking requirements in all clinical areas and waiting rooms, effective **Monday September 18th, 2023**. Prior to this date, staff and physicians are encouraged to complete their own assessment of risk. Masks are readily available for anyone who wishes to wear one.

What is changing:

Starting Monday September 18th, medical grade masks will be required once again in all clinical areas at all times and in waiting rooms for patients, visitors, staff and volunteers. Masks are recommended but not required in public areas such as hallways, elevators, cafeteria and café. Signage will be updated and masking stations will be set up at the entrance to each clinical area.

What is not changing:

Maintain good infection prevention practices such as social distancing (when able), wearing masks more regularly, completing point of care risk assessments and pay close attention to hand hygiene. Continue to report new onset illness to the Occupational Health and Safety Department (extension 8200).

Moving Forward:

The Regional Infection Control Team, in collaboration with local public health units, continue to monitor a number of indicators to help us determine when we are experiencing higher risk periods, based on local epidemiology. Additional changes to masking requirements which may include more extensive use of masks, will be guided by this team.

FAQs:

Q: Are staff / Physicians required to wear masks at the nursing stations or if delivering something to a clinical unit?

A: Yes, masks are required at all times in clinical areas.

Q: Are visitors required to wear masks on clinical units?

A: Yes, visitors will be required to wear masks at all times when attending a clinical unit or waiting room.

Q: Are porters required to wear masks outside of clinical areas?

A: If porters are on clinical units or transporting a patient, they are required to wear a mask. If they are walking through non-clinical hallways without a patient, they do not need to wear a mask.