

SUBJECT: **Update: Information for Modified Red Alert Period**

FROM: COVID Joint Response Team

DATE: February 28, 2021 | 11:06 p.m.

***The following message is approved for distribution to all Health PEI staff and physicians by Marion Dowling and Corinne Rowswell, COVID-19 Joint response Team Co-Leads. Please post for those without email access.***

Dear Staff and Physicians,

CPHO and Premier King have announced PEI will be under a modified Red Alert phase of PEI's COVID-19 Response as of March 1, 12:01 am for 72 hours.

During this time, Health PEI is instituting measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 within health care sites and to continue protecting our staff, physicians and patients. The following information is broken into sections for your easy reference.

### **Staff testing and self-isolation requirements**

We have sought clarification from CPHO on the direction for isolation and testing for health care workers based on the public exposure notifications this weekend.

#### **Staff with Symptoms**

- Staff and physicians who have any symptoms of COVID-19, including mild symptoms, must not go to work. They must get a COVID-19 test and may not return to work until after they receive a negative test result AND feel well. They must self-isolate while awaiting a test result.
- If symptoms occur during a shift, the worker must complete hand hygiene, wear a mask and leave work immediately. They must then get a test and self-isolate until receiving a negative test result.

#### **Staff who are a close contact of a positive case**

- If you have been notified by public health that you are a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, you must not go to work.
- You must follow public health direction for testing and self-isolating.

#### **Staff who were at an exposure location**

- Anyone who was present at the Iron Haven Gym in Summerside at the specific dates and times notified must get a COVID-19 test. They may not attend work even if they receive a negative test result, and they must continue to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of their exposure at the Gym.
- For anyone who was present at any of the remaining public exposure locations at the specified dates and times must get a COVID-19 test. They may attend work and do not need to await their negative test result prior to attending work. They

must carefully monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the date of their exposure at these locations.

### **Unvaccinated Long Term Care staff aged 20-29 years old**

- LTC staff aged 20-29, who have not yet received their second vaccine, or have any symptoms of COVID-19 must get a COVID-19 test. They may receive a rapid test at one of the asymptomatic testing sites at Three Oaks High School or Stratford Town Hall. They do not need to await their negative result before returning to work.

### **Visiting within Health Care sites**

- Beginning immediately Health PEI is limiting visitors to all health care sites other than Long-term Care facilities.

### **Inpatient Acute Care**

- Inpatients may have up to three partners in care identified. No other visitors are allowed.
- Exceptions will be made for compassionate circumstances including end of life, and in Pediatrics, Obstetrics, and Palliative care.

### **Emergency Departments, Mental Health Care Services, and Ambulatory Care**

- Individuals receiving care in these departments are permitted one support person to accompany them.

### **Long Term Care**

- Due to the high level of vaccination, there has been no change to Long Term Care visiting. Residents may continue to have up to three partners in care and up to six designated visitors.

### **Remote Work and Virtual Meetings**

- All employees who can work remotely will be required to do so during this time. Managers are asked to work with those staff to make the necessary arrangements.
- If anyone needs to come to the office to pick up a laptop, or other work materials, please make arrangements to do so at staggered times to limit the number of employees in areas at any one time.
- Safety protocols must be adhered to at all times in the work place, such as wearing masks, distancing, no gatherings etc.
- Employees who cannot work remotely will continue to work at their workplace and limit unnecessary visits to other offices, shared spaces or public areas.
- All internal and external meetings are to be held virtually during this time.

### **Office Closures**

- Garfield Street and Douses Road office locations will be closed to the public for the 72-hour period.
- Islanders who require services may do so virtually. If an in-person visit is unavoidable, they must make an appointment and be screened before attending their booked appointment.
- Patient appointments at the Douses Road location may continue as normal with screening.

### **Child care**

- Schools are closed during the 72-hour period. Early learning centres (day cares) continue to operate at normal levels.
- During this time, staff are encouraged to reach out to the normal care providers for alternate arrangements.
- If you have exceptional circumstances affecting your ability to get child care, please work with your Manager and HR.

### **Thank you and stay safe**

Thank you to all staff and physicians who have made such important contributions to the response over the past year and in particular the last few days. Please remember to take care of yourselves, practice self-care, and refer to EAP for support as needed.

Also, please continue to follow all public health guidance as closely as possible. As Health Care Workers, we should lead by example. Keep your circles small, wear masks and other PPE as directed, and wash or sanitize your hands frequently.