COVID-19 Update #11

Today’s message focuses on our continued preparations for the expected increase in COVID-19 cases.

**Visitor Policy**
Given the increasing concerns about community transmission, TOH will implement a **no visitor policy starting Saturday March 21, 2020**. While this is an exceptional measure, it is based on the best available guidance and is necessary to protect patients, staff and the community. To ensure that our policy is aligned with TOH’s values to the greatest extent possible, exceptions to this policy will be allowed on compassionate grounds. The visitor policy framework for exceptions and ethical considerations will be posted on [MyHospital](https://myhospital.com) tomorrow.

**Planned approach to ramping down non-emergent care**
As mentioned earlier, we have begun implementing a phased-in approach to reducing non-urgent activity in the hospital. Patients whose elective surgeries, clinic visits and diagnostic tests are being impacted, have been or are in the process of being notified. Where possible, hospital visits are being completed using virtual care tools.

**Essential supplies and equipment availability**
A lot of public attention has turned to concerns about availability of essential supplies and equipment, including personal protective equipment, testing swabs, sanitizers and ventilators. Currently, supplies and equipment are sufficient to meet our needs. We continue to monitor our stock daily and work with provincial and federal partners to maintain our stock of essential supplies and equipment. It is in all of our interests that we continue to use our supplies appropriately.

**Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) around the hospital**
It has come to my attention that a number of staff are wearing personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, face shields and gowns) inappropriately, including in public areas of the hospital. For your safety and that of others, please review and ensure that you understand [when PPE should be worn and how it should be worn](https://www.toh.org.gov/ppe-guidelines), particularly during this time.
Thank you again for your support and understanding. We will continue to keep you informed as the situation evolves, and provide you with the information and support that you need.