

Memo to All Staff

Subject: Changes to Patient Placement related to COVID volumes in hospital and community

Date: December 17, 2020

Effective December 17th, 2020

As the incidence of COVID 19 rises in our community we are seeing increased cases of both confirmed and suspect cases in the hospital. As such we need to change some of our admission processes to preserve as much hospital capacity as possible for the expected surge of COVID admissions in the coming days and weeks ahead. In addition we will begin testing ALL patients on admission and on day 5 for COVID 19. All patients are to remain in Enhanced Droplet Contact Precautions for the duration of their admission. See attached algorithm for cohorting direction. We are also implementing effective today Rapid PCR testing. All details can be found below.

Rapid PCR Testing:

Effective Thursday December 17th, 2020, a rapid COVID-19 PCR test will be available from the Microbiology Laboratory located at the WRH Ouellette campus. Testing will be available Monday to Friday (excluding holidays) from 7am – 10pm and Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from 8am – 3pm. However, due to worldwide demand, only a limited amount of test kits are available. At this point in time, we only have access to 200 tests per week for the region. To maximize the use of this rapid PCR test locally, a group of Physician and Administrative stakeholders from each hospital were brought together to develop a prioritization framework.

The prioritization framework for local testing:

Inclusion Criteria; must meet one of the following:

- Symptomatic patient that test result will change immediate management of patient or patient outcome.



- Patient is undergoing an urgent Aerosol Generating Medical Procedure (AGMP), including oral maxillofacial or ENT procedures, tracheostomy, rigid flexible bronchoscopy, CPAP or BiPAP-see back of guideline for list of AGMP that may be considered for 1 hour rapid turnaround test.
- Symptomatic patient that test result will assist with immediate cohorting and capacity.
- Patient in ED is asymptomatic and admission can be prevented with a negative test result through community placement (GEM)

Exclusion Criteria

- Test result will not avert admission.
- Test result will not change immediate patient management or patient outcome.
- Patient is an outpatient requiring ambulatory or elective services.

If the ordering physician still feels there is sufficient reason to order a rapid COVID test, please have the MD contact the WRH Chief of Staff or designate immediately for approval.

To order the rapid COVID-19 PCR test, use the existing COVID-19 orders in order entry, identify the specimen with a STAT sticker on the specimen and plastic bag and send immediately to the Microbiology Lab at the Ouellette campus. If originating from another site, transport by cab/taxi if necessary. At WRH, the Rapid COVID-19 Test Order Set must be used. Once the daily allotment has been used up, specimens will be transported to LHSC for testing as per current practice.

Patient Cohorting Updates:

Met Campus

Positive COVID and high risk symptomatic patients will continue to be admitted preferentially to 4N. In order to maintain telemetry capacity 4110 and 4109 (8 beds) will be allocated for clean telemetry patients.

Staff will be cohorted to care for positive patients as much as possible to minimize risk of transmission.

When capacity is full on 4North, 5North will be utilized as the second positive COVID and high risk symptomatic unit.

Low risk asymptomatic medical patients will be admitted to 7N.

Ouellette Campus

Positive COVID and high risk symptomatic patients will continue to be admitted preferentially to CTU.



When capacity is full on CTU, 7W will be utilized as the second positive COVID and high risk symptomatic unit.

Low risk asymptomatic medical patients will be admitted to 6 East.

All rooms on the above units will be gender neutral to maximize capacity. Patient moves for other than medical necessity, i.e. transfer to ICU, are to be avoided.



COVID-19 Testing, Precautions, and Patient Placement

All patients are to be swabbed for COVID-19 on admission to WRH and will be placed in Enhanced Droplet and Contact Precautions for the duration of their stay. For confirmed COVID-19 positive from the community a second test is not required, but evidence of the positive result must be on chart.

