

Pembroke Regional Hospital

MEMO

To: All Staff and Physicians
From: Kirsten Johnson, Manager of Infection Control, on behalf
of the Infectious Disease Command Centre
Date: 2025 April 22nd
Subject: Masking Requirements Update

The Infectious Disease Command Centre has reconvened to review current internal risk indicators for respiratory illnesses and provincial trends for COVID-19, RSV, and Influenza. As these risk indicators continue to decrease both locally and provincially, the Command Centre has made the considered decision to further relax the enhanced masking requirements at PRH.

Effective immediately, universal masking is no longer required within the Emergency Department (including the waiting room) and the Systemic Therapy Unit.

Although masking is not universally required, it is crucial that staff and physicians continue to identify patients at risk for respiratory illnesses. This must be done using the Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Screening tool and effective risk assessment practices. Patients who do not pass the screening must be placed on the appropriate level of precautions. This includes posting clear signage and ensuring effective communication during care transitions (e.g., utilizing the IPAC section of the SBAR, identifying additional precautions on requisitions, and verbal communication during handovers).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn as indicated by the posted signage and point-of-care risk assessment. These infection prevention and control principles are essential for reducing the risk of transmission for our patients, staff, physicians, and visitors. Proper implementation of these measures will also help maintain low internal risk levels and reduce the need to reinstate enhanced masking requirements.

As always, masks will remain readily available for anyone who chooses to wear one.

We appreciate your continued commitment to keeping our staff, physicians, and patients safe. We will continue to monitor both internal and external risk indicators and will make further decisions as necessary.