

PEMBROKE REGIONAL HOSPITAL

MEMO

TO: All Staff, Physicians, Volunteers and Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

FROM: Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

DATE: January 3, 2021

SUBJECT: Contact Tracing, Staff Exposure and Return to Work

With the recent announcement of a second COVID positive staff member and the subsequent press release issued, some concerns have been raised about the risk of returning staff members to the work environment.

When Occupational Health and Safety or Infection Control becomes aware of a positive case, contact tracing begins immediately. Each person contacted is evaluated based on provincial guidelines in consultation with the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU). Evaluation is based on a number of elements such as PPE worn, time of exposure, length of exposure, presentation of symptoms, etc. Based on this assessment, staff are then identified as either high risk or low risk contacts and scheduled for testing based on their last point of contact and/or presentation of symptoms and a planned return date is scheduled. In some cases, a person may be required to stay off for a shorter or longer period of time or be tested more than once.

Because of all the variables, each person's case can be slightly different. This can cause confusion for other staff when a person

is returned to work. Again, PRH follows all provincial guidelines and directives in consultation with the RCDHU

We would like to assure staff that PRH does not take these decisions lightly and takes all factors into consideration, not only with respect to the individual but also with respect to the impact and risk to the unit or hospital. The ultimate goal is to protect both staff and patients.

No high risk contacts from the recent exposure have been cleared to return to work at this time.

Hospital jobs are tough at the best of times and not without risk. We would like to remind you that your best protection is to perform accurate daily screening, practice physical distancing, wear appropriate PPE and be diligent with hand hygiene. When we all do our part, we will keep each other and our patients protected.