

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, Dec. 11, 2020

Kingston Health Sciences Centre adjusts screening criteria to address rising COVID-19 prevalence regionally and provincially

KINGSTON, Ont. – Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) is adjusting its screening process for patients and family members (visitors) as COVID-19 prevalence continues to rise locally and as a more regions across the province are declared control (red) or lockdown (grey) zones.

Two additional screening questions at KHSC's Kingston General Hospital and Hotel Dieu Hospital sites are related to travel both outside of Ontario, as well as to and from those areas in the province that are currently in control (red) or lockdown (grey) zones.

Specifically, the questions ask:

- In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Ontario?
- In the last 14 days, have you visited*/resided in or had guests from a location in Red or Lockdown (Grey) status or outside Ontario? *Visited: Spent greater than 15 minutes indoors or within an enclosed space.

Family members who answer "yes" to either question will not be permitted to enter the hospital except under special circumstances, such as if they are visiting someone who is actively dying. Caregivers accompanying a minor are encouraged to make alternative arrangements wherever possible.

Outpatients who answer "yes" to either question will be managed with extra precautions. Inpatients who answer "yes" will be placed under quarantine for a period of eight days.

The new screening criteria will also have an impact on designated family members (visitors) to hospitalized patients. Work is now underway to help patients and families make the necessary changes in the registered visitor system to ensure the visiting process can continue as smoothly as possible.

KHSC asks patients and family members to read and understand the Guidelines for Families Visiting Loved Ones during COVID-19, which are available at the patient entrance from the screeners and on our website at <https://kingstonhsc.ca/patients-families-and-visitors/covid-19-information/visitor-and-family-presence-restrictions>.

"KHSC requires patients and visitors alike to answer these questions due to the continued increase of community spread of COVID-19 throughout the Kingston area and additional regions across Ontario entering red and grey status," says Dr. Gerald Evans, KHSC's medical director of infection control.

"High-quality health care is our top priority and that's why we must work together to protect the 500 inpatients we have in our facilities on any given day," Dr. Evans said. "Now is the time for all Kingstonians to exercise extreme vigilance to help protect our most vulnerable community members – and each other."

"We are extremely grateful to Kingston area residents for all their hard work and sacrifice in protecting our community thus far through the COVID-19 pandemic," says Elizabeth Bardon, KHSC's vice-president of mission, strategy integration and support services.

“We know it hasn’t been easy but ask that you continue this important work by helping our dedicated health care workers do their jobs by answering screening questions honestly and continuing to limit your contact with people outside of your household bubble,” Ms. Bardon says. “Thank you for your cooperation and care as we work together to stop the COVID-19 spread.”

For more information on COVID-19 protocol at KHSC facilities, please visit www.kingstonhsc.ca/covid19.

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ABOUT KINGSTON HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) is southeastern Ontario’s complex, acute and specialty care, research and teaching hospital. Consisting of our Hotel Dieu Hospital (HDH) site and Kingston General Hospital (KGH) site, as well as the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario and our research institute, we care for more than 500,000 patients and their families from across our region. As one of the region’s largest employers, we are home to nearly 5,000 staff members, more than 2,000 health-care learners and 1,000 volunteers who are committed to partnering with patients and families to ensure that we continually provide high quality, compassionate care. Fully affiliated with Queen’s University, we are ranked as one of Canada’s top research hospitals. As a teaching hospital, we attract some of the nation’s brightest learners to pursue their health care education, which helps to create the capacity to provide highly specialized services close to home. We train thousands of students every year and are home to hundreds of researchers whose curiosity drives them to make groundbreaking advancements in health care. Please visit www.kingstonhsc.ca for more information.