

October 14, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Health System Organizations and Providers

SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Preparations and Actions

In follow-up to our last communication, we are pleased to share additional updates from the provincial Health Command Table on key actions that are being taken to ensure that Ontario's health care system is prepared for the Fall influenza season and effectively responding to COVID-19, including:

- **Actively monitoring the impact of recently implemented health human resources (HHR) programs and rapidly developing additional initiatives to build a workforce that can be deployed in urgent situations.**
 - HHR strategies already implemented and in development will focus on retaining, and improving the resiliency of, the current health system workforce.
 - The Ministry of Health, Ontario Health and the Michener Institute have developed a training program to rapidly onboard volunteers from non-health sectors who will be providing resident aid and assistance in long-term care homes.
- **Preparing for increased demands in clinical supplies and equipment and supporting sectors to ensure they have sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to safely deliver care and respond in potential outbreaks.**
 - The Ministry of Health and Ontario Health will provide additional guidance on the proper use of PPE and strategies to ensure a stable supply.
 - The ministry is exploring additional actions to further build the provincial stockpile of N95 masks at the same time as domestic production is underway.
- **Enhancing testing capacity through the potential use of new point-of-care tests that will soon be available in Ontario.**
 - Command Table reviewed recommendations from the Testing Innovation Taskforce on the most appropriate settings and approaches for implementing new testing methods, including point-of-care tests.
 - The Taskforce includes representation from public health units, universities, hospitals, laboratories, OH, and PHO.

We thank you for your continued work to respond to the pandemic and implement a phased recovery.

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

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