

October 28, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Health System Organizations and Providers

SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Preparations and Actions

This week, the Health Coordination Table focused on the following key actions to ensure that Ontario's health care system is prepared for the Fall influenza season and effectively responding to COVID-19:

- **Supporting primary care providers to resume in-person patient visits.**
 - As part of ongoing health system recovery efforts, primary care utilization rates have returned to near pre-pandemic levels and the number of in-person visits are on an upward trend.
 - To support more consistent approaches to the provision of primary care services across the province, the Ministry and Ontario Health are working with partners such as the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and the Centre for Effective Practice to streamline guidance to frontline primary care providers.
- **Ongoing implementation of additional beds to increase hospital capacity and address the surgical backlog.**
 - The Ministry is working with the Ontario Health regions to actively track and monitor the status of bed openings across the province to ensure sufficient regional capacity to meet demands.
- **Continued focus on outbreak prevention and management in long-term care and retirement homes.**
 - The Ministry is working with the Ministry of Long-Term Care and Ontario Health to identify opportunities to improve testing turnaround times and rapid containment of cases in homes.
 - The Ministry is working with the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility to strengthen the responsiveness of outbreak management plans for retirement homes.
- **Reviewing scientific evidence on potential interventions to improve patient outcomes and recovery.**
 - The Science Advisory Table presented the latest research on the effectiveness of Remdesivir as treatment for patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

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

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

Helen Angus
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health

Dr. David Williams
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Ministry of Health

Matthew Anderson
President and CEO
Ontario Health