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May 25, 2003

## Communiqué

The following updates are provided for your information and appropriate action:

### General Information

- Fit-testing of masks continues to be an important part of the integrity of the personal protection equipment. All health care service providers and facilities should take measures, consistent with the material circulated on May 2, 2003, to ensure that fit-testing is taking place. Priority should be given to those areas of the facility and those individuals most likely to be in contact with probable/suspect SARS patients or persons under investigation. If your organization needs assistance with arranging for fit-testing, please contact us through the SARS Health Hotline

### Hospitals

- Scarborough General Hospital is confirmed as a category 3 at this time
- Some questions have been raised by hospitals as to who is speaking on behalf of the ministry on operational issues. This will confirm that hospitals, and other facilities, have administrative structures in place to direct local operations. From time to time the ministry will provide additional advice or direction to ensure a systems approach which provides the best response in these challenging times. These ministry-driven directions or advice will usually be in writing on SARS letterhead and will **always** have ministry approval. Directives and/or advice from the ministry are in effect until the ministry changes or rescinds them
- Hospitals are reminded that completion of the information for the Daily SARS Levels Report is a requirement. Please ensure that the information is complete, accurate and submitted in time. The information must be approved by clinical or administrative staff before releasing it to the ministry. The document is used by other hospitals, other service providers, ambulance services and others to inform their planning and decision-making

The ministry will provide interim e-mail updates when a hospital has a significant change of category which others' will need to inform their decision-making

- Maintenance of the CritiCall database is required by all hospitals. This information is of particular relevance in these challenging times.

## Health Care Providers in Community Settings and Community Health Care Agencies

- The May 13<sup>th</sup> directive is being re-circulated to ensure that all health care providers in the community and those in community health care agencies have it in hand. (See “New Normal” directives on this site : Directive to Ontario Health Care Providers in Community Settings and Community Health Care Agencies (Excluding Community Care Access Centres) [PDF])
- In Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), including Toronto, York Region, Durham Region and Peel Region, there has been a significant increase in SARS-related activity over the past week. It is recommended that health care providers in Toronto and the GTA move to the SARS outbreak control measures (section C, page 3) at this time. Highlights of the outbreak control measures are:
  - Telephone and personal screening
  - Signage
  - Enhanced personal protective equipment

The screening process should include reference to the following hospitals: North York General Hospital (Leslie Street site); The Scarborough Hospital (General site); St. John’s Rehabilitation Hospital; and St. Michael’s Hospital. Specifics can be found on the ministry website <http://www.health.gov.on.ca>