



## **Patient Masking Guidelines For Staff**

All patients will be required to wear a mask during their hospital stay unless medically exempted by the healthcare team. The list of exceptional circumstances is listed at the end of this document.

The purpose of masking patients is to provide an additional layer of protection out of an abundance of precaution. It can also minimize the number of patients identified as high-risk contacts and subsequently put into isolation precautions after a staff member, family/caregiver or other individual is diagnosed with COVID-19.

Patients will be required to wear a mask:

- Whenever they leave their bed space
- Whenever any person enters the bed space

***Bedspace:*** a) a Private Room

b) a patient bed and the area inside the bedside curtains, if in a shared room

Patients are NOT required to wear a mask:

- When sleeping
- If not able to wear a mask and medically exempted by healthcare team. Refer to exceptional circumstances list.

### **Mask Use**

- Patients can be provided with a new mask once a day.
- Do not provide patients with mask/visor combination.
- If the mask becomes soiled, damaged or lost, a new mask should be provided to the patient.

Masks should be stored near to the patient so it is easily accessible should patients be physically able to put it on themselves.

- On a paper towel on the bedside table
- On a hook at the bedside (3M Command Hooks can be purchased through Grand and Toy)

All Staff Members should ask a patient who is able to wear a mask to put one on prior to entering the bed space. Be respectful of all patients

Patient, Family, Caregiver Information Sheets can be provided as needed.

Full boxes of masks are **NOT** to be stored in each patient room.



Exceptional Circumstances where patients may not be required to wear a mask:

- people, especially children, with severe sensory processing disorders
- patients with facial deformities that are incompatible with masking
- children less than 2 years of age
- children less than 5 years of age (cognitively or developmentally) who refuse to wear a face covering and cannot be persuaded to
- people with PTSD who are triggered by a face covering
- extreme agoraphobia/asphyxia phobia (which is longstanding predating COVID 19)
- people with cognitive impairment, intellectual deficiency or autism spectrum disorder for who wearing a face covering will cause severe distress or disorganization
- people unable to apply or remove a face covering without help
- people with accommodations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or the *Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disabilities Act* (that would pertain to wearing a face covering i.e. immobilization in a wheelchair would not qualify)

There may be additional circumstances, or activities where patients would not be able to use a mask. Please use best judgement and ask for clarification as needed. Masks should be maintained according to these requirements as much as possible.