

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre implements further visitor restrictions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

(Thunder Bay, ON – Friday, March 27, 2020) The health and safety of patients, their families, staff, professional staff, and the community is our utmost priority. To help prevent the risk or spread of COVID-19, **only essential care partners** will be permitted at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre until further notice. This extends to people who may have been previously identified as care partners in recent weeks.

#### Essential Care Partners are defined as:

- the care partner of a patient who is dying or very ill (e.g. when imminent death is anticipated or possible in the next 72 hours);
- a parent/guardian of an ill child or youth;
- the care partner of a patient undergoing surgery (up to 1600 the day following surgery); or
- the care partner of a woman giving birth.

“Our Hospital’s definition of Essential Care Partners builds on the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care’s definition of essential visitors so as to protect patients, family members and health care providers, while maintaining compassion in our acute care environment,” said Dr. Stewart Kennedy, our Hospital’s COVID-19 Incident Manager. “We understand that visitor restrictions can be difficult, but safety must come first. This is the appropriate and responsible thing to do under these extreme circumstances and is in accordance with the recommendations of Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health.”

Daily screening remains in place for the limited number of care partners that will be permitted.

To help patients and their families stay connected, free telephone service may be available to those without mobile devices and virtual visitation options are being explored. Patients are strongly encouraged to use their personal devices to access Tbaytel’s free WiFi while on site at our Hospital.

Additional measures may be implemented depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic evolves. We are committed to informing the community accordingly.

For more information about our Hospital’s COVID-19 response, please visit <http://tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>.

For more information about COVID-19, please contact Thunder Bay District Health Unit at (807) 625-5900 or toll free at 1-866-294-6630, or Telehealth toll free at 1-888-294-6630.

# MEDIA RELEASE



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre

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More information is also available at [www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus](http://www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus) or <https://files.ontario.ca/moh-coronavirus-info-sheet-english-2020-02-18.pdf>.

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**Members of the media are invited to speak with Dr. Stewart Kennedy, our Hospital's COVID-19 Incident Manager, Dr. Zaki Ahmed, Chief of Staff and possibly others:**

When: Friday, March 27 at 2:00 pm

Where: Room 202A, Medical Centre Building, 984 Oliver Rd.

**Media contact:**

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807-684-6010

***Healthy Together***

*Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, a 375-bed academic specialized acute care facility, is a national leader in Patient and Family Centred Care. As the only tertiary care provider in Northwestern Ontario, we provide comprehensive services to a population of over 250,000 residents in a region the size of France.*

*Effectively addressing the health care needs of patients and families has earned us both Innovation Awards and Leading Practice Designations.*

*As an academic health sciences centre, we teach the next generation of health care providers and advance medical research. Patients benefit from interprofessional teams of dedicated health care providers and access to leading-edge medical technology and clinical trials.*