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Open Letter to Ontario Premier and Deputy Premier/Minister of Health

May 13, 2020

Dear Premier Ford and Deputy Premier/Minister of Health Elliott,

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre was pleased to learn about your government's Pandemic Pay offer for dedicated health care workers who engaged in the fight against COVID-19. I applaud this initiative; providing the highly deserved Pandemic Pay is the right thing to do. However, it is the collective belief of this hospital's Senior Leadership Council that the Pandemic Pay should be awarded as inclusively as possible.

Staff categories outside of those identified to receive Pandemic Pay have gone above and beyond the call of duty to keep Ontarians safe during this pandemic. The delivery of safe, quality health care is the result of interprofessional teamwork. Many health care employees work side-by-side with each other and are exposed to the same risks on a daily basis. The exclusion of certain groups from this well-intentioned recognition has generated divisiveness and disengagement within our Hospital and community at a time when unity is needed more than ever before.

I implore you and the Ministry of Health to reconsider the implementation of Pandemic Pay to ensure all health care workers, with the exclusion of Chief Executive Officers, are included.

We know that you, along with all Ontarians, value the unprecedented efforts and extraordinary professionalism put forth by all Hospital employees during these trying times. If Pandemic Pay is offered in the spirit of recognition for their efforts, that recognition should be extended to all.

Sincerely,

Jean Bartkowiak,  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre  
Chief Executive Officer  
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