



March 26, 2020

Subject: Effectively Responding to COVID-19

I am writing on behalf of our essential services members working on the front lines to ensure patient treatment and care is delivered during exceptional and unprecedented circumstances.

We appreciate the demands on hospitals are changing rapidly and we are committed to working with the hospital to ensure the response to the crisis is effective, while minimizing the risks for patients and staff to the greatest extent possible. In turn, we request your commitment to consulting and collaborating with our representatives to draw upon their experience and knowledge to ensure the most effective, sustainable and safe response.

The temporary emergency measures announced by the Government of Ontario on March 21st, 2020, provide unprecedented authority to local hospital officials to deploy personnel in response to the crisis. We all share the common goal of ensuring a well-coordinated and effective pandemic response. We seek to ensure that the hospital's response to the crisis is measured, balanced and sustainable, so as not to impede the effective delivery of patient care for the duration of this crisis.

Understanding that the success of the crisis response ultimately relies upon the capacity of the workforce to maintain services under stressful circumstances for an extended period, we need to ensure that appropriate consideration is afforded to maintaining the health and safety of hospital employees. This includes:

1. Where redeployment is considered necessary, ensuring employees are adequately equipped, trained and qualified to perform the required work;
2. Should reassignment or rescheduling be considered necessary, ensuring adequate notice to allow employees to manage family responsibilities, including childcare, elder care and sufficient rest periods;
3. Ensuring that work from home arrangements for employees not required on site are utilized and supported to the fullest extent possible;
4. Providing paid leave to employees forced to stay home due to sickness, quarantine or family care in those situations where alternate care cannot be arranged.
5. Ensure Personal Protective Equipment is deployed when appropriate, without exception.

PIPSC staff will be following up with your office to request a meeting to discuss this further.

In closing, your employees are critical to the success of the community's response to this crisis, and I encourage you to take all necessary steps to ensure their wellbeing and safety.

Sincerely,

Debi Daviau, President, PIPSC