

# Keeping you informed

## Enhanced IPC Measures for Fall/Winter 2023/24

September 29, 2023

### What is happening?

In preparation for the viral respiratory illness (VRI) this fall and winter, B.C. will be reinstating enhanced infection prevention and control (IPC) measures in health care settings, services, and programs, including community physician offices and outpatient clinics. Based on provincial guidance/direction, Fraser Health (FH) is implementing enhanced IPC measures, including the masking of staff, visitors, volunteers, and contractors in patient/resident areas on **October 3, 2023**.

### Why is this happening?

Additional IPC measures can help reduce respiratory infection (RI) transmission in health care settings.

### How this may affect you?

#### Masking

- Staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors should wear a mask at all times in patient/resident/client care areas.
- Staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors must wear a mask during Acute Care RI outbreaks and in long-term care (LTC) when directed by Public Health.
- Masks are not required when visiting a resident in their room, or an assisted living unit, or when visiting in a common area of the care home/residence when others are not around.

#### Patient Ambassadors

- Patient Ambassadors will be reinstated at facility entrances to facilitate safe visitation and provide a welcoming environment. Ambassadors will:
  - Offer masks to all visitors.
  - Offer hand hygiene opportunities to all visitors.
  - Promote wellness check for respiratory symptoms.
- There is no requirement for point-of-care COVID-19 testing for visitors.
- There is no proof-of-vaccination requirement for visitors.

#### Staff Self-Assessment

- Staff to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of illness prior to work.
- Staff to stay home when sick.
- Health care workers will follow updated exposure and return-to-work guidance for viral respiratory illnesses. This includes self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of illness prior to work and staying home when actively sick.

An updated exposure and return-to-work guidance for health care workers with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 will be published on the BCCDC website as soon as it is available.

Thank you for your patience as we implement this change. Expect further information including a Q&A to follow.

## Questions?

Email [IPCAdmin@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:IPCAdmin@fraserhealth.ca)

For questions related to Patient Ambassadors, please contact:

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