



To: Hospital CEO's and Primary Care Providers

From: Matthew Anderson, Ontario Health, President & CEO

Date: April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Re: Ramp down of elective surgeries and non-emergent/non-urgent acute care activities**

Thank you for making every effort to maintain critical care services, including your ongoing support of the actions of the Regional IMS structures and the Ontario Critical Care Command Centre. Your tireless efforts have allowed us to respond to the pandemic as a provincial system and protect the patients we serve.

Today, given increasing case counts and widespread community transmission across many parts of the province, we are facing mounting and extreme pressure on our critical care capacity. As a result, effective Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, (12:01 a.m.) we are instructing hospitals to ramp down all elective surgeries and non-emergent/non-urgent activities in order to preserve critical care and human resource capacity. In making these clinical decisions, regulated health professionals should be guided by their regulatory college.

We will be continuously monitoring this ramp down with a view to bringing on surgical capacity and other deferred services as soon as safely possible.

At this time, the ramp down instruction does not apply to the Northern Ontario Health Region. However, hospitals in this region should be prepared to ramp down quickly, in the near future, if requested to do so. Pediatric specialty hospitals are advised not to ramp down any capacity and continue with plans to care for children and youth, recognizing that we may ask you to do more, if required, to support other hospitals in your region. Additionally, for some hospitals in low COVID-19 areas, very limited ambulatory services may continue, recognizing that immediate ramp down may be required. Please confirm with your Regional Lead.

Going forward, we may request available health care workers/teams to support care in other parts of the system. We will be asking you to identify available staff who might be redeployed to sites requiring support and for receiving sites to help integrate these staff members into their teams.

During this time, we need primary care providers to continue your important role in maintaining care for Ontarians. We know that patients continue to need essential primary care services, including cancer screening and immunizations, in addition to your COVID-19 response efforts (COVID@Home and vaccinations). Thank you for continuing to meet the primary care needs of your patients.

These are very difficult and challenging times for all Ontarians, and we understand that deferring scheduled care will have an impact on patients and their families and caregivers.

As always, thank you and your teams for your ongoing support.

Matthew Anderson