

Message to Community: Increased testing volumes; Maintaining safety while resuming some services; Cloth masks needed



Following the province's introduction of expanded testing guidelines, the RMH COVID-19 Assessment Centre has seen a significant increase in testing numbers. To date, RMH, in partnership with Kawartha Lakes Paramedic Service, has provided 2176 assessments, and 1019 tests. "This increased testing volume is helping to identify COVID-19 cases in our community," says Kelly Isfan, President and CEO, "and we encourage any community member who is concerned that they could have COVID-19 – whether due to mild symptoms, close contact with a suspected or confirmed case, or being at high risk due to their employment – to call us at 705-328-6217 to arrange testing."

Expanded testing may often result in additional cases says Dr. Lynn Noseworthy, Medical Officer of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, especially with people who do not have any symptoms of the virus. "The province and public health have been telling people to assume that everyone they come in contact with could potentially be a carrier of the virus," says Dr. Noseworthy. "We know that some people are asymptomatic (have no symptoms) yet have the virus and this additional testing is helping to identify those cases so we can help stop the spread."

That's why, both Dr. Noseworthy and Isfan urge residents to continue to follow the public health recommendations designed to stop the spread of the virus:

- Maintain physical distance by staying 6 feet apart from others
- Do not gather in groups of more than 5
- Wear a cloth mask if you are unable to maintain distance while out of your home (such as in a grocery store, public transit, etc.)
- Wash and/or sanitize your hands often
- Stay home if you are ill

Maintaining safety as some hospital services resume

RMH, along with regional hospital partners, has received approval from Ontario Health to gradually ramp up some surgeries and procedures. As we thoughtfully resume these services, our priority is to maintain the safety of patients, staff and physicians. If you are awaiting surgery at RMH, your physician will contact you to arrange pre-operative COVID-19 testing, and ask you to self-isolate prior to your procedure.

Accessing COVID-19 Testing

The COVID-19 Assessment Centre phone lines are open from 8a.m.-4p.m. daily and can be reached at 705-328-6217. Testing takes place at the Lindsay Exhibition, at 354 Angeline St. S, from 9:30-5:30 daily. Community members are encouraged to call to book a same-day appointment. Individuals without appointments can be tested at the centre, but may experience wait times. You can also review current symptoms, take a self-assessment and view your lab results at ontario.ca/coronavirus.

Cloth masks

If you're heading to the hospital for an appointment or to the Emergency Department and already have a cloth mask, please wear it throughout your visit. If you don't have a cloth mask, one will be provided to you, which is yours to keep.

As we resume some services, we'll need more cloth masks to provide to patients and essential visitors. If you are available to sew and donate cloth masks, please follow our guidelines [here](#). Thank you to all those who have donated cloth masks so far. You are truly making a difference and helping to conserve Personal Protective Equipment for our front-line workers.

Stay up-to-date

Positive cases continue to be reported on our health unit's website: www.hkpr.on.ca. Information specific to RMH at rmh.org/covid-19.