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## Ross Memorial works to provide options as COVID-19 testing numbers surge Hospital CEO echoes Doug Ford's request that only people who need to be tested or have symptoms line up

News 09:53 AM by [Catherine Whitnall \(/kawartha-author/catherine-whitnall/1E0E6AE6-EB40-4A3C-A4A9-CC957BF70779/\)](/kawartha-author/catherine-whitnall/1E0E6AE6-EB40-4A3C-A4A9-CC957BF70779/) 

<mailto:cwhitnall@mykawartha.com> Kawartha Lakes This Week



*Ross Memorial president and CEO Kelly Isfan said a variety of reasons for seeking testing have contributed to a volume in cases recently. These include contact with*

*confirmed positive person or symptomatic person, workplace and nursing home visit screening, child-care centres and schools requiring a negative test and screening prior to surgery, medical procedures and travel. - Amanda Carvalho photo*

The province has ordered people to stop getting tested for COVID-19 “just in case” in order to ease pressures on testing centres, but it’s unknown whether it will have a significant impact on the testing centre operating at Ross Memorial Hospital.

The centre has tested an average of 219 people daily since it moved back to the hospital from the Lindsay Exhibition grounds on July 6, although there was a huge spike of 394 tests on Sept. 21.

Ross Memorial president and CEO Kelly Isfan said a variety of reasons for seeking testing have contributed to a volume in cases recently.

These include contact with a confirmed positive person or symptomatic person, workplace and nursing home visit screening, child-care centres or schools requiring a negative test, and screening prior to surgery, medical procedures and travel.

“We also find that our testing volumes tend to follow the same curve as the provincial case count,” noted Isfan. “The more positive cases in our province, the more people seek testing.”

Isfan said the hospital saw numbers steadily increase throughout the spring, then drop slightly in the summer.

“Numbers are now high again, with most days seeing at least 200 people at the assessment centre,” she said. “Mondays are typically the busiest day of the week. Our testing volumes reflect the provincial case count curve, with a marked increase in the last few weeks. Since March, we have performed more than 20,000 tests, when factoring in our assessment centre, emergency department, in-patient testing and our support to long-term care, retirement and other congregate settings.”

There has also been an increase in families seeking testing for their children. The assessment centre can test anyone over the age of one via the same nasal swab as adults.

However, Isfan recommends that children that exhibit such symptoms as a fever longer than seven days, fever with a rash, fever with a weakened immune system, difficulty breathing, bluish skin, not drinking enough fluids, not waking up or interacting as usual, constant vomiting and extreme irritability should be taken to the emergency department.

Infants under three months that have a fever, are having trouble breathing and appear unwell should also be brought in right away.

While the majority of individuals seeking testing are City of Kawartha Lakes residents, many do have addresses outside of the area, and this could be for a variety of reasons.

“But no matter what the reason, as a community, as a province and as a country, we are in this together,” said Isfan.

Isfan recognizes that this and other factors can lead to long wait times, but the team is working hard to keep the process moving, including setting up a “pop-up” clinic back at the fairgrounds.

With broad testing being one of the keys to containing COVID-19, the Ross Memorial laboratory has been busier than ever as staff also source swabs to support the hospital’s own testing and co-ordinate daily runs to the provincial labs that are completing COVID-19 testing, to help ensure results are provided in a timely manner.

The hospital is currently working with its partners to provide more options for testing in the community, especially in light of changes in the weather, while also evolving the drive-thru model – individuals can also walk or cycle to the clinic – based on the demand for testing and resources.

To address pressures expected to be created by a second wave and cold and flu season, Isfan encourages the public to get their flu shot.

“Our hospital plans for ‘seasonal surge’ related to influenza, which puts us predictably over capacity, year after year. To help our hospital manage a potential increase in hospitalizations related to COVID-19, we urge you to get your flu shot as soon as it becomes available. This is especially important for seniors,” said Isfan.

The public is also encouraged to access [www.rmh.org/covid-19 \(https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A\\_www.rmh.org\\_covid-2D19&d=DwMGaQ&](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_www.rmh.org_covid-2D19&d=DwMGaQ&)

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by [Catherine Whitnall](/kawartha-author/Catherine-Whitnall/1e0e6ae6-eb40-4a3c-a4a9-cc957bf70779/) (/kawartha-author/Catherine-Whitnall/1e0e6ae6-eb40-4a3c-a4a9-cc957bf70779/)

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