



**Lakeridge  
Health**

March 18, 2020

To our Friends and Neighbours across Durham Region,

Lakeridge Health is taking necessary steps to keep people safe and stem the spread of COVID-19 across our regional acute care hospital system.

This means making difficult decisions that include welcoming fewer people into our hospitals and postponing some visits or procedures. We have made these changes to protect patients and the Lakeridge Health team, and to ensure we have the critical hospital capacity required to care for the most acutely ill people over the coming days, weeks and months.

#### **New Visiting Protocols**

Visiting is now allowed only for our most vulnerable patients. There is a maximum of one visitor/caregiver per patient per day in some areas including the labour and delivery program. We will also welcome one visitor per patient per day for paediatric, palliative care and cognitively and emotionally vulnerable patients. This change is difficult for patients and for families, and we appreciate how hard it can be to not see your loved ones. Lakeridge Health is supporting and encouraging virtual and telephone visits as visiting and socialization is an important part of healing.

#### **Screening when Entering**

For those able to visit within the visitor protocols, we are screening at all entrances of Lakeridge Health hospitals to ensure everyone entering is well and free of illness. This includes all of the Lakeridge Health team. Anyone who is unwell will not be allowed to enter the hospital as ultimately this protects everyone.

#### **Changes to Surgery Schedules**

To ensure we can meet the needs of the most acute patients, we will be proceeding only with emergency and other priority surgeries. This will allow us access to inpatient beds and critical health care providers as the outbreak evolves. We will reschedule non-urgent surgeries as soon as we are able.

#### **COVID-19 Assessment Clinic for Durham Region**

Lakeridge Health has opened a COVID-19 Assessment Clinic to support timely screening and assessment in Durham Region. **A referral from a primary care physician/clinic or Durham Region Health Department is required to access the Clinic.** If you have a fever, cough or other flu-like symptoms complete the online assessment form available on the Lakeridge Health website. Those who meet the criteria to have a COVID-19 assessment will be contacted within 24 hours by a member of the clinic team.

#### **Stay Well**

To support the health and wellness of patients, please do not come to our hospitals if you are unwell. Wash your hands regularly and use alcohol-based sanitizer, stay home when you are ill, cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze and avoid touching your face. And, for now, avoid groups and try to keep two metres between yourself and others. Most of all, stay calm and maintain your routines.

#### **Keep Current**

Visit Lakeridge Health's COVID-19 web page at [www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca](http://www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca) for the latest information.

At Lakeridge Health, we will work closely with our health care partners and the entire Durham Region community so that we may minimize the impact of COVID-19 on the citizens of our region and our care providers.

Thank you for your support of Lakeridge Health.

Yours in health,

Susan deRyk  
Interim President and CEO

Dr. Tony Stone  
Chief of Staff