

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CAMH COVID-19 POLICY

June 30, 2022

### Screening

#### **1. How are people being screened at CAMH?**

As of July 1, 2022 CAMH will implement passive screening for staff, physicians, learners and volunteers. Passive screening means people will abide by the commitments they made in their COVID-19 self-attestation and can enter CAMH buildings through entrances other than the screening stations. Signs at hospital entrances that includes information on masking and the symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19 will remind us to stay vigilant.

Active screening will remain in place for patients, visitors, essential care partners, and contractors. Inpatients will continue to be screened as part of the admission process.

#### **2. When and where can people enter CAMH?**

Staff, physicians, learners, and volunteers will be able to enter CAMH buildings at any entrance where they have access through their security card. Please ensure your security cards are up to date, and that you have a procedure mask on if you do not enter through a screening station where masks are available.

Hand sanitizer and masks will be available on the units, in clinics, in main hallways, and in work stations for people who are passively screening.

Patients, visitors, essential care partners and contractors can enter CAMH buildings at these screening centre entrances at these times:

- Crisis and Critical Care Building and Unit 1: 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Mon – Sun
- McCain Complex Care and Recovery Building: 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Mon – Fri, and 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays
- Bell Gateway Building: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Mon - Fri
- College Street: 8:00 a.m – 4:30 p.m. Mon - Fri

Due to the reduction in active screening, screening staff will be reduced to one or two screeners at each station (depending on location).

#### **3. What if patients, visitors, contractors or essential care partners arrive when screening centres are closed?**

Patients, visitors, contractors and essential care partners arriving after screening hours should phone their unit's or clinic's extension. If they do not have the extension, patients, visitors, contractors and essential care partners should go to the Emergency Department's registration desk and staff there will help redirect them and contact the appropriate unit or clinic directly.

#### **4. How are we protecting our people when screening at entrances is no longer in place?**

Many of our ongoing policies and practices support a safe environment for our patients and our people, such as:

- Universal masking policy remains in place for everyone who enters our buildings.
- Ensuring we come to work well, without COVID-19 symptoms or other illnesses.
- Continuing to require that staff, physicians, volunteers, learners and contractors are vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Care teams will continue to have access to appropriate PPE based on point of care risk assessments.
- Policies related to physical distancing and room capacity remain in place.
- Active screening will take place for outpatients, and inpatients will continue to be screened as part of the admission process.

### **Vaccination**

#### **5. Is CAMH removing its vaccine mandate?**

CAMH's COVID-19 vaccine requirement remains in place for staff, physicians, volunteers, learners and contractors. As of July 1, 2022, COVID-19 vaccines will no longer be required for visitors and essential care partners. This decision is consistent with recommendations coming out of the COVID-19 Hospital Operations Table for the Toronto Region. Essential care partners are important to our patients' health and well-being and we will continue to balance the need for family presence with the factors that ensure a safe environment. We strongly recommend everyone stay up-to-date on the COVID-19 vaccine doses they are eligible for, as vaccines continue to provide excellent protection against more severe outcomes and contribute to a reduction in the spread of COVID-19.

#### **6. Why is CAMH removing the vaccine requirement for visitors and essential care partners visiting the hospital?**

Visitors and essential care partners are important to our patients' health and well-being. In fact, essential care partners are an extension of patients' care teams. Other protective measures will continue to be in place at CAMH, including the requirement that everyone entering the hospital to wear a procedure mask.

We strongly recommend everyone stay up-to-date on the COVID-19 vaccine doses they are eligible for, as vaccines continue to provide excellent protection against more severe outcomes and contribute to a reduction in the spread of COVID-19.

#### **7. Are COVID-19 vaccine policies still in place for people working at CAMH?**

Yes. CAMH policy requires staff, physicians, learners, volunteers and contractors to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Our people work in a vulnerable setting, and vaccination against communicable diseases, including COVID-19, is the best way we can keep each other and our patients safe.

**8. Why do health care workers need to continue to be vaccinated for COVID-19 while hospital visitors and essential care partners no longer require proof of COVID-19 vaccination?**

As we move into a different, highly vaccinated, phase of the pandemic, we are shifting our approach to preventing COVID-19 from some of our early pandemic practices. As health care workers work in a setting with vulnerable people, vaccination against communicable diseases is the best way we can keep our patients safe.

**9. Are other hospitals also removing proof of COVID-19 vaccination for visitors and essential care partners?**

Yes, based on guidance from the Toronto Region Hospital Operations Table, other hospitals in the Toronto Region will also be removing their requirement to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination for visitors and essential care partners. There may be some exceptions based on the patient population.

**Masking**

**10. Are there any changes to CAMH's masking policy?**

CAMH's masking policy continues to be an important infection prevention and control tool. Consistent with our peer hospitals in Toronto, our indoor masking policy will remain in place. Everyone entering a CAMH building, including the parking garage and elevators, will be required to wear a procedure mask. When outdoors, staff must wear a procedure mask when providing patient care. If people are not providing patient care, masks can be removed if they are able to physically distance.

**11. Could the requirements change again if the COVID-19 situation changes?**

We have seen throughout this pandemic that COVID-19 is unpredictable and can evolve quickly. We all need to continue to be vigilant and remain prepared to implement additional protective measures if we see evidence of variants that spread more easily and are more severe.