

Ministry of Health

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May 19, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: Health Care Providers

RE: Revocation of Chief Medical Officer of Health Directive #2 and the Resumption of non-urgent and non-emergent surgeries and procedures

Over the past several months, we have seen the ongoing diligent and tireless contributions of all our health system partners in the response to the COVID-19 emergency.

On April 20, 2021, in light of increasing COVID-19 case counts, hospitalizations and ICU admissions, Directive #2 was amended and re-issued to require health care providers to temporarily cease non-emergent and non-urgent surgeries and procedures in hospitals and in community settings. This was done in an effort to ensure that our health resources could be focused where they were most urgently needed. Such measures are never taken lightly, and we recognize the impact they have had on patients waiting for their scheduled surgeries and procedures, and on health care providers across the province.

At this point in time, new cases, hospitalizations, and ICU admissions appear to be trending downward. While these numbers remain high and we continue to see demand for health services related to COVID-19, we are beginning to see available capacity among community and hospital partners in some areas of the province. It is therefore important to make use of this available capacity to limit the long-term impacts on patients awaiting non-urgent care.

As such, Directive #2 for Health Care Providers is being rescinded effective today and non-urgent and non-emergent surgeries and procedures may be gradually resumed by health care providers and health care entities who were subject to that Directive.

In gradually resuming non-urgent and non-emergent surgeries and procedures, all health care providers should continue to follow the guidance issued by the Ministry of Health in the [COVID-19 Operational Requirements for Health Sector Restart](#), as well as all other sector-specific Ministry of Health guidance and other CMOH Directives. Hospitals should ensure their resumption of non-urgent and non-emergent surgeries and procedures follows the

requirements set out by Ontario Health in the appended memo *Gradual resumption of non-emergent and non-urgent surgeries and procedures: Memo #1*.

As we gradually and cautiously resume non-urgent and non-emergent care, we will continue to closely monitor COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and critical care capacity and will respond rapidly should we see a worsening of the situation. We will work with our health system partners to take the necessary measures where needed to ensure all Ontarians continue to have access to critical health care services.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

David C. Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health

c: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health
Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health