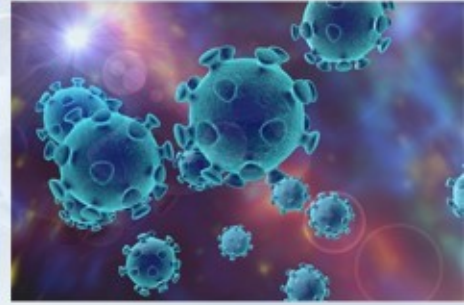


COVID-19 Update

Employee and Physician Information



Memo from the Vice President

April 4, 2020

Re: Collection of used N95 respirators for medical device reprocessing

The current COVID-19 pandemic has placed significant strain on health-care resources worldwide, particularly on N95 respirators.

In light of the current global shortage and urgent demand for N95 respirators required to safely care for suspect and confirmed COVID-19 patients, Eastern Health, like many other organizations around the world, has been exploring innovative ways to maintain a safe supply of N95 respirators for our staff and physicians.

We are trialing a new process that involves the sterilization of N95 respirators. This process, using a Sterrad sterilizer, has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to sterilize non-cellulose N95 respirators up to two times. Presently, this process is being used at the Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre and it is expected to receive approval by Health Canada. The Sterrad sterilizer has been used for many years in Eastern Health to achieve low temperature sterilization of medical devices through the use of vaporized hydrogen peroxide.

At this time, Eastern Health is moving forward with the collection of used N95 respirators. Starting today, **April 4, 2020**, health providers will begin to see secured collection bins marked for N95 recycling in select areas that use N95 respirators, such as in operating rooms, bronchoscopy suites and emergency departments. N95 respirators will not be collected from COVID-19 units.

Health providers are asked to bag their used, not visibly soiled N95 respirator in the paper bags provided for sterilization at collection points. Soiled N95 respirators should be discarded as per usual process. Bagged N95 respirators will be transported to the Medical Device Reprocessing Department for reprocessing and placed in storage until approved for release.

The reprocessing of N95 respirators can give us a way to ensure that our health providers are safely protected and able to do their jobs with confidence, while we continue to aggressively pursue alternative sources and options to manage our supply of N95 respirators.

We would like to reassure our staff and physicians that their health and safety, and that of their families and those we care for, is our top priority.

We thank you for your continued efforts, flexibility and support during this challenging time.

Questions? Please see the [COVID-19 intranet page](#).

Ron Johnson

Vice President with responsibility for Medical Device Reprocessing

For more information:

- [COVID-19 Employee and Physician Email Updates](#)
- Visit: [COVID-19 Intranet page](#)
- Email: covid19.inquiries@easternhealth.ca
- Updates pertaining to Eastern Health's ongoing services will be posted on Eastern Health's [News Centre](#), [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter feed](#).