



COR-2020-086278

March 17, 2020

Mr. Robert Thompson
Executive Director
Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association
164 MacDonald Dr.
St. John's, NL
A1A 4B3

Dear Mr. Thompson:

RE: COVID-19 Restrictions Imposed for Regional Health Facilities

As you are aware, the Department of Health and Community Services has imposed restrictions on health care services within the regional health facilities. Please consider this urgent request of NLMA to communicate with physicians regarding the need to restrict non-urgent care in efforts to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission while maintaining an appropriate level of service delivery. We appreciate your assistance in circulating the following information:


Elective surgeries and therapeutic/diagnostic procedures were accommodated on March 16, 2020. As of March 17, 2020, surgeries and procedures will be restricted to urgent/emergent only, and anything not urgent or emergent will be rebooked. Other health care services will continue, including, but not limited to, primary care and ambulatory care clinics, cancer care, in-facility dialysis, and inpatient rehabilitation.

At this time, we ask that providers please refrain from requesting diagnostic testing that is of a routine nature, and restrict the use of laboratory and medical imaging services to those required for **urgent/emergent** care, only. As the COVID-19 situation evolves, there are many uncertainties about the impact it will have on supply of diagnostic testing supplies, and on the human resources required to maintain services. Our clinical laboratory and medical imaging services must remain robust to tolerate these challenges such that other aspects of care may continue to be delivered effectively.

We appreciate that a degree of interpretation may be required by physicians, other health care providers, and regional health authority leadership to implement these restrictions. We trust that you will collaborate locally and work with the Department to navigate the complexities of providing ongoing care to best mitigate the risk of coronavirus transmission while sparing critical system resources.

Thank you for your professionalism and support during this challenging and uncertain period.

Sincerely,



Janice Fitzgerald, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer of Health (Acting)