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HHHS Expands Acute Care Capacity and Separates Facilities for COVID and non-COVID needs

As part of efforts to protect the health and safety of patients, residents, staff, and community members in Haliburton County, Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) has been exploring ways to separate its facilities for COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 needs. The Acute Care Unit in Haliburton has been expanded from 15 to 21 beds for COVID related needs, and a new 9 bed Acute Care Unit has been created at the Minden site for non-COVID related admissions.

It is important to first note that both the HHHS Minden and Haliburton sites are prepared to safely accept patients, whether they are presenting with respiratory illness or not. Staff are following strict safety precautions in all HHHS facilities, including screening everyone who enters either site, using personal protective equipment (PPE), and creating appropriate spacing for distancing between patients.

With the establishment of the Haliburton County COVID-19 Assessment Centre beside the HHHS Haliburton site, HHHS wants to ensure that community members who present to the Emergency Department with potential or mild/moderate COVID-19 symptoms can be easily referred to the Centre for further assessment and testing, if needed.

As well, in an effort to maintain as much separation as possible between patients who have respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever) and those who do not, HHHS is now encouraging Haliburton County residents with respiratory symptoms who wish to visit an Emergency Department to go to the Haliburton site. Residents with no respiratory symptoms who wish to visit an Emergency Department should come to the Minden site. It is important for the public to know that no emergency will be turned away from either site. Care may be redirected between sites, depending on care needs and COVID considerations.

Keep in mind that if you suspect you might have COVID-19 symptoms and are not experiencing an emergency situation, the first step to take is to complete the online self-assessment at [Ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://ontario.ca/coronavirus). If directed by the self-assessment, you may then call the Haliburton Family Medical Centre at 705-457-1212 (press 6) during regular business hours to book an appointment for testing. Residents can also contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. If you are in distress and require an ambulance, it is important that you tell the dispatcher any respiratory symptoms.

About Haliburton Highlands Health Services
Leaders in Innovative Rural Health Care

Haliburton Highlands Health Services, working with partners and accountable to our community, promotes wellness and provides access to essential, high quality health services including: Primary Care, Hospital (Acute Inpatient and Emergency Care) Long-Term Care, End-of-Life Care, Mental Health & Addictions Services and Community Support Services.

About Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation is an incorporated registered Canadian charity that financially supports the hospitals and health care facilities in Haliburton County, for capital projects, equipment, education programs and community support services. The money is raised through personal, business & corporate donations, special events, promotions, annual giving and the special gift program. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who dedicate their time and expertise to have better health care and hospital facilities. The Foundation does not provide funds for the operation of the facilities.