



Memo

To: GTA COVID-19 Assessment Centres, Emergency Departments, Inpatient Units

From: COVID-19 Isolation Site Project Partners: Inner City Health Associates, University Health Network, Parkdale Queen West, The Neighbourhood Group, Shelter, Support & Housing Administration and Toronto Public Health

Date: April 16, 2020

Re: COVID-19 positive site for those experiencing homelessness or living in shelter

In response to increasing demand for a safe recovery space for people experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for COVID-19, a former isolation site for persons awaiting COVID test results has been converted to an interim COVID recovery site.

This site is managed through a partnership between the University Health Network, Inner City Health Associates, Parkdale Queen West Community Health Center, The Neighbourhood Group, Shelter, Support & Housing Administration and Toronto Public Health.

Currently, the site has the capacity to care for 34 COVID positive individuals who are asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, and are at relatively low risk for progression to severe illness due to COVID. Priority will be given to patients currently admitted to hospital, including those who were previously at the isolation site. In order to create capacity for the COVID positive site, PUIs will no longer be admitted and hospitals are being asked to hold PUI clients until the results are back.

The site is run using a harm reduction and trauma-oriented approach, and staff includes peer supports and harm reduction workers. Clients are housed in individual hotel rooms, and will be required to spend most of every day behind a closed door. Consideration will be given, therefore, to clients' ability to tolerate this type of isolation for 14 days.

To refer individuals to the recovery site, please complete the attached referral form, and fax it to Inner City Health Associates at the indicated number. The ICHA physician on-call will determine eligibility (eligibility criteria are indicated on the form). The site Charge Nurse will call to confirm acceptance. Once acceptance is confirmed, ICHA will work with the City of Toronto to arrange transfer of the patient to the isolation shelter. The referring site is responsible for the disposition of the client until they have been transferred to the COVID positive site.

Referrals are accepted 9am-11pm 7 days a week. Questions may be directed to the ICHA physician on-call at **289-212-6843**. We are happy to be able to offer this interim solution, to improve the availability of acute care hospital beds, and to provide a safe, welcoming environment for people experiencing homelessness to recover from COVID-19.

Please direct questions to:

- Dr. Gary Bloch at Gary.Bloch@unityhealth.to
- Dr. Andrew Boozary at Andrew.Boozary@uhn.ca