



ADVISORY

Updated IPAC Recommendations

Monday, May 1, 2023

Over the course of the pandemic, new Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) measures have been implemented in health care settings to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and to help preserve the operational capacity of the health care system. Our increasing knowledge of the SARS CoV-2 virus has led to IPAC control measures that have strengthened our ability to manage the surges of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.

Public Health Ontario has recently released the following Technical Brief to guide decision making on IPAC measures: [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Measures Based on Respiratory Virus Transmission Risk in Health Care Settings](#)

IPAC Recommendations

To continue minimizing transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses, Peterborough Public Health (PPH) supports our hospital partners and other health care settings who have chosen to continue to require universal masking in all patient care or clinical areas. We also continue to recommend that other IPAC measures are used, including screening, environmental controls, and masking in non-clinical areas, as appropriate for your facility and based on the PHO Technical Brief recommendations.

We also recommend consideration of good ventilation and enhanced indoor air quality (IAQ) to reduce transmission of respiratory viruses. Strategies for improving IAQ include:

- Opening windows and doors
- Using commercial air cleaners
- Building Corsi Rosenthal boxes
- Ensuring HVAC systems are operating as designed
- Using MERV-13-rated filters

Visit <https://ospe.on.ca/indoor-air-quality/> for a list of OSPE recommendations to improve indoor air quality.

Local COVID-19 and Respiratory Virus Risk Index

PPH will continue to monitor and advise on the local risk level to support decision-making for IPAC measures. We recognize that frequent changes to risk level and associated changes to IPAC measures may be difficult to implement within health care settings. Therefore, we will use specific indicators to determine when recommendations for enhanced IPAC measures are necessary based on high-risk periods of transmission, these include: the emergence of a new variant with high morbidity or mortality, significant changes in local epidemiology, or significant changes in other regions in the province.

Since April 5 the local risk index has remained low. [The Risk Index](#) is updated weekly on Wednesdays after 5:00 p.m.

This advisory can be found on our website by visiting: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/health-professionals/.