

Hello Everyone

Thanks to all of you we have made it through another week!

This message is intended to clarify our protocol around the wearing of masks now and moving forward. In the interest of complete transparency, I also want to disclose where we stand, in terms of quantities on hand.

The news is actually very good. And yet this kind of full disclosure will make some of you nervous. I can only say that we have so many of these and so many of those. I cannot tell you that we have an absolutely unlimited supply of everything. If you've been watching the news you will know that no one in the world is saying that. Please try to focus on the things that you can control; like the delivery of our services, like staying at home as much as possible when you're not at work, social distancing and hand washing. We will worry about augmenting our supply of PPE and we'll keep you informed of our progress.

Down below, I have inserted a link to a couple of videos put out by WHO (the World Health Organization).

As you know, we recently centralized the bulk of our PPEs. All sites still have 12 N95 respirators, 20 gowns, at least 100 gloves, 2 re-usable goggles and 1 large alcohol-based sanitizer.

We centralized the PPEs for two reasons... (1) We wanted to do a very accurate count and this was proving difficult to do from a distance, and (2) in the event that we do have a suspected case in a group home, we wanted to be able to ship in a bulk supply, quickly, without running all over north Durham gathering one up.

We have also developed a model in order to project the quantities of PPE that we might need.

Such models are based on various assumptions. We assumed that:

- One person in every group home becomes sick, or is suspected of being sick, for up to 30 days.
- The person is isolated in his or her room and staff wear an N95 respirator when entering (in order to bathe, freshen up, provide snacks and meals, or give meds).
- Everyone else in the house wears a dust mask and changes them four times per day (in the case of 7 or 8 hour shifts) and 6 times (in the case of extended shifts).
- The sick person wears a washable cloth or canvas mask if he or she is able; every other resident of the home is offered one.
- In this model, and without sharing the complicated spreadsheet, every home uses 360 N95s in a month.
- Simcoe and Union go through 1,080 dust masks in 30 days; Prince Albert only 260.

If the person who is suspected of having the virus, or actually does have it, is not able to self-isolate in their room, that will complicate our model a wee bit. The person would be re-located to South Balsam but it would not actually have much impact on our PPE supply. H

All of this, if you line it up with the results of our inventory count, suggests that we're actually in good shape.

We have more than 3,500 N95 respirators, almost 5,000 dust masks, 3,700 gowns and 117,000 gloves of various sizes, including about 22,000 Nitrile gloves for latex allergies.

What this means is that we could have someone sick in 5 or 6 different homes and after 30 days the only thing we'd be running short of is dust masks. According to the WHO videos I'm linking you to, you do not need to wear a mask in the home even if a person is sick, as long as that person is able to be isolated in his or her room and you are not entering the room. But, we accept that the presence of the virus will cause anxiety levels to increase, and so at that point everyone will be able to don a mask.

We are continuing to augment our supplies. An order for 1,000 surgical masks was placed today. We expect to be able to source dust masks more easily than most of kinds of PPE and if that proves not to be the case, staff could switch to canvass or cloth masks. We are actively soliciting donations of these. Our stock has risen to 150 in just the last few days.

For the present, with no suspected cases on hand, masks are not to be worn. Indeed, staff with underlying conditions have been told to book off rather than wear masks. Please do not wear even your own drywall masks to work. Since they might or might not be sterile coming in, they could actually pose a risk to your co-workers. And they have to be changed multiple times per day or they become unsafe for the wearer.

Because of an illness at Simcoe, unrelated to the virus, a three-day supply of dust masks was delivered there yesterday for use when in close contact with the supported person, but that is business as usual.

Have a wonderful weekend everyone... and now the videos!

[When and How to Use Masks](#)



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