

St. Mary's COVID-19 Outbreak Frequently Asked Questions – for patients and families

My loved one is a patient at the hospital, what do I need to know?

- We understand this can be distressing news. Please know that St. Mary's declared an outbreak out of an abundance of caution and we continue our safety measures for staff and patients.
- Currently, our third floor unit is closed to new patient admission and to patient transfers. Patients who require care from these units will be cared for in our alternative unit.
- As our COVID+ unit, patient admissions to our sixth floor will continue and staff will continue to wear appropriate protection when caring for patients.
- All other service across the hospital remains unaffected.
- We want to reassure you that the care at St. Mary's continues to be safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to follow all official directives and public health guidance for COVID-19 and to continually reinforce staff and patient safety during this challenging time.

What are some measures that have been put in place to make sure this doesn't happen again?

Some of the measures at St. Mary's to date that will be further emphasized and expanded upon include:

- Enhanced screening for all individuals entering our hospital, including staff
- Initiating a no-visitor policy, except in exceptional circumstances
- Regular staff education and reminders on the use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing and hand-hygiene
- Active surveillance to identify clusters and follow-up investigation. These cases were identified through that rigorous process.
- Cleaning of high-touch surfaces in the hospital four times per day.
- Education of patients and families about the safety procedures of the hospital given enhanced precautions during COVID19
- As part of ongoing risk assessments, continually reviewing our practices and implementing new measures as required.

If I'm on the unit, will I be allowed to go home or do I have to wait until the outbreak is over?

- No, once your care provider decides you are suitable for discharge, you will be discharged home.

Are there any special precautions that I or my loved one need to take once I am discharged home?

- We ask that you [self-monitor](#) for symptoms. If you have questions and/or you experience any symptoms, please contact your primary care provider or Public Health at 519-575-4400.

How do I know what symptoms to look for?

- Please check [here](#) for a self-assessment tool.

What about visitors?

- Our visitor restrictions are still in place, at this time, no visitors or caregivers are allowed in hospital except under exceptional circumstances. This will be decided in consultation with the patient's unit.

Who do I contact if I have more questions?

Patients or families with questions can call St. Mary's Patient Experience Office at 519-749-6578, ext. 6867. Anyone discharged from the third floor unit from April 2 to April 17 will be contacted by Waterloo Region Public Health.