



The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Bulletin has been created to provide ongoing direction to health-care providers regarding the recommended guidelines, processes and provincial supply of PPE. If you have any questions about PPE please call the OHS Hotline at 1-833-233-4403 or email [OHS\\_Healthcareworkers\\_COVID19@saskhealthauthority.ca](mailto:OHS_Healthcareworkers_COVID19@saskhealthauthority.ca)

### World Health Organization (WHO) Recommendations:

A provincial process is in place, led by physicians and operational leaders together with support staff with expertise in Infectious Diseases, Infection Prevention & Control, Occupational Medicine and Respiratory Medicine, Supply Chain and the Ministry of Health to make evidence and data informed recommendations on decisions for appropriate use and allocation of PPE.

Additionally, a subgroup of experts actively monitors, reviews and assesses relevant information related to COVID-19. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and the scientific evidence rapidly expands, this group works to ensure that information and standards continue to be adjusted and updated as new information emerges. As such, guidance is subject to change based on evidence and the progression of the pandemic.

A recent update on July 9, 2020 to the scientific brief originally release by the WHO on March 29, 2020, titled "[Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19: implications for infection prevention and control \(IPC\) precaution recommendations](#)" includes new scientific evidence available on the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority and Ministry of Health have reviewed the evidence and remain in agreement with the WHO's continued recommendation of droplet and contact precautions (which includes gown, gloves, face shield and a procedure mask) when caring for COVID-19 patients and airborne precautions (the use of an N95 respirator) when an aerosol generating medical procedures (AGMPs) is performed within health care facilities. These recommendations are consistent with other national and international guidelines.

It is important to note that the WHO continues to recommend physical distancing, frequent hand washing, self-monitoring, avoiding indoor crowded gatherings as much as possible and isolating immediately if you develop symptoms. They also stand by the use of a continuous masking strategy as an important part of a comprehensive package of preventative measures given that infected people without symptoms can transmit the virus.

### Supply of PPE during elevated activity of COVID-19 transmission

As the province begins to see surges in COVID-19 transmission it is important that areas affected continue to have a sufficient supply of PPE and that their supply increases based on local demand. Supply Chain has been working diligently to ensure that SHA staff and physicians have PPE supplies in the right place at the right time.

Inventory is being managed carefully at a local level, to ensure availability and accessibility when and where required. **If you anticipate an increase in the need for PPE on your unit or if you have any concerns about PPE stock availability you should connect first with your local Supply Chain/Inventory Managers as processes are in place to escalate to provincial Supply Chain leadership as required.**





Local Supply Chain teams are connected to provincial PPE committees to enable timely responses to any inventory concerns and to proactively address any issues before they reach front-line staff. On a daily basis, Supply Chain counts and monitors all PPE inventory in local Stores and tracks demand to identify critical risks. During Supply Chain daily huddles, the provincial team discusses possible PPE surges, potential inventory shortages, and transfer of product among sites.

Supply Chain is prepared for increased PPE use in the province. The provincial supply is continuously monitored to ensure PPE needs are being met and distribution strategies align with provincial needs.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

- 1. We used to use masks with visors built in but are being told that these are no longer recommended eye protection for COVID patients/residents. Why have recommendations changed?**

Visor masks are not appropriate eye protection for any droplet contact precautions (COVID-19 included) because they do not protect your eyes from droplets in the air from settling into the visor as they begin to fall due to gravity. Recommended eye protection for droplet contact plus precautions is a face shield or indirectly/non vented goggles. Please reference the [Rapid Update on eye protection](#) for further information.

