

### **Riverside Launches COVID-19 Surveillance Testing for Asymptomatic Resident/Inpatients & Staff**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect within many long-term care facilities, prompting the Ontario government last week to direct public health to support asymptomatic (no symptoms) testing of residents and staff at long-term care homes for COVID-19.

Riverside Health Care is taking the proactive step to test all asymptomatic staff, residents and inpatients across the continuum of care. Phase 1 priority testing has already begun with residents and select staff at our long-term care facilities, with plans in place to further test Riverside inpatients and the balance of our staff.

“Riverside firmly supports the government’s stance on increased surveillance testing, and we have already initiated testing of asymptomatic residents and staff across the district.” stated President & CEO Henry Gauthier. “The introduction of asymptomatic testing may inform future strategies and added preventative measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. This additional testing enhances protections for those we serve and our staff, and demonstrates a clear shift across the health care system to a more proactive approach in combating COVID-19.”

Riverside has already tested numerous long-term care residents and staff members. “To date all results have come back negative,” noted Julie Loveday, Vice President of Clinical Services & CNE. “With our capacity and network it is imperative we progress our fight against COVID-19. Our teams already have put extensive precautions and controls in place to prevent the spread of the virus. This added screening of asymptomatic people in our facilities is another way to expand protection for everyone.”

Earlier this month Riverside implemented a new courier service running 7 days a week to transport COVID-19 tests from all Riverside facilities including their Assessment Centres. Testing turn-around times have improved dramatically from upwards of 10 days to a new average of 2-3 days, as tests are now delivered from Thunder Bay to Toronto daily. This courier service has been able to serve Riverside’s Indigenous Health Partners and the Atikokan General Hospital in also transporting their COVID-19 swab tests to Thunder Bay.

Riverside remains committed to providing excellent quality care in a safe and healthy environment, with the well-being of our residents, patients, clients, staff and the community a continued focus and priority.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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President & Chief Executive Officer  
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**Reference:**

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Riverside Health Care is a fully accredited multi-site, multi-function health care system serving the residents of the Rainy River District. Riverside Health Care operates hospitals in Fort Frances, Emo and Rainy River, and Rainycrest Long-Term Care Home and La Verendrye Non Profit Supportive Housing in Fort Frances. Each community is also served by Riverside Community Counselling which provides mental health and addictions services, Community Support Services through Rainycrest and Riverside Valley Diabetes Education Centre which provides important chronic disease management programming. For more information, please visit [riversidehealthcare.ca](http://riversidehealthcare.ca)