

This guideline has been reviewed and adjusted to reflect Southern Health-Santé Sud protocols and policies.

## MEMO

**Date:** April 22, 2020 **REVISED April 24, 2020**  
**To:** All Health Care Workers  
**From:** Dr. Brent Roussin  
Chief Provincial Public Health Officer  
Lanette Siragusa, Provincial Lead Health System Integration & Quality,  
Chief Nursing Officer, Shared Health  
**Re: COVID-19 – Information for Health Care Workers with Underlying Medical Conditions and Potential Risk Factors for Severe COVID-19**

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Manitoba's COVID-19 Incident Command has designated Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health (OESH) as the body responsible on behalf of Employers for receiving and assessing staff/physician requests for medical accommodations in the workplace related to COVID-19.

Staff or physicians who have concerns about an underlying medical condition, medication, or immune compromised status affecting their ability to report to work or safely perform the duties of their job should contact OESH.

In Southern Health-Santé Sud, work with your local Disability Coordinator.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Employers will continue to utilize their normal process with respect to requests for medical accommodations.

Staff/physicians requesting a medical accommodation are required to **provide objective medical evidence** to OESH from their Primary Care Provider in support of their request.

Dr. Allen Kraut, OESH Lead for Manitoba's COVID-19 Response, and his team will review concerns raised by staff, supporting medical evidence received from employees, staff records and workplace exposure as part of the decision-making process with respect to each requested accommodation. Decisions regarding the approval of accommodations and the nature of the accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Guidance has been distributed to Manitoba's Primary Care Providers regarding the evidence on risk level of contracting COVID-19 to individuals with underlying medical conditions, medication

or immune compromised status. Please refer to <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-guidance-for-hcws-with-medical-conditions.pdf> for more information.

This memo is intended to provide the appropriate guidance and assistance to Primary Care Providers in determining the nature of the medical evidence which is required and acceptable to the employer to support an employee's request for a medical accommodation related to COVID-19.

Protecting the health and safety of all staff is an imperative for employers. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that the appropriate steps are taken to protect the health and safety of all health care workers in Manitoba including those who may have underlying health conditions and require accommodations by preventing exposure to and transmission of COVID-19.

Employers have developed robust safety practices, including personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements. Manitoba's COVID-19 Incident Command has designated Dr. John Embil as Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Lead for Manitoba's COVID-19 Response. Together with clinical leadership and guided by the experience of other jurisdictions, Dr. Kraut and Dr. Embil are informing Manitoba's PPE requirements.

PPE requirements and guidelines will be updated as information evolves and the ultimate source of guidance for PPE required in the workplace. Provided that employees follow the guidelines and requirements, those with underlying medical conditions or other risk factors are not at greater risk of being exposed to COVID-19 than any other employee.