

**Ministry of Health**

Primary Health Care Branch  
Physician and Provider Services  
Division

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**Ministère de la Santé**

Direction des soins de santé primaires  
Division des services de médecin et des  
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November 21, 2022

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Family Health Teams  
Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics  
Indigenous Primary Health Care Organizations

**FROM:** Nadia Surani  
Director  
Primary Health Care Branch

**RE:** Important Ministry Request – Respiratory Illness Season

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Throughout this pandemic, primary care providers continue to work tirelessly in their efforts to maintain comprehensive primary care to their patients, while answering each call by the Ministry of Health (the “ministry”) to support pandemic related efforts. On behalf of the ministry, I thank each of you for this commitment to your patients, your communities and the health care system.

The difficult and complex fall respiratory illness predicted by the health care system has materialized. COVID-19, influenza and Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are actively circulating across Ontario in all of our communities. This scenario is contributing to pressures on our healthcare system, particularly in the paediatric sector, and we are expecting high-volume pressures across our health system now and through the winter.

As a result of the above, I am writing to call on your support and requesting your organizations to offer clinical services 7 days a week, including evening availability, until further notice, to meet the needs of your patients. Please advise your patients of this availability so they may seek care in the appropriate place for their health concerns.

Every effort made to increase your organization’s availability to patients will support the healthcare system to alleviate pressure on emergency departments. Attached is a memo from Ontario Health to primary care providers dated November 3, 2022, that provides guidance and supports to help you in your work.

Interprofessional primary care teams who participate in these efforts can contact their ministry representative if there are anticipated extraordinary costs associated with the expansion of availability.

Thank you for your assistance in this critical matter. Your ongoing support, commitment and dedication in the fight against the pandemic and other urgent system pressures are greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please connect with your assigned ministry contact.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nadia Surani", is positioned above the printed name.

Nadia Surani

Attachment