



SARS Provincial Operations Centre

May 13, 2003

As Ontario moves to lift the SARS provincial emergency, health care organizations and workers must prepare for entering a new phase of practice – a phase that has been named the “new normal”.

The new normal will be characterized by high standards of practice that reflect a heightened awareness of emerging infectious diseases including SARS. Goals of practice are the prevention of exposure, early detection of new cases with appropriate management, protection of others in the community and health care setting, and full and appropriate management of those individuals with other health care needs.

At this time there remains a high probability of sporadic re-introduction of SARS resulting in local cases with the potential for transmission, particularly from recent travelers. Health care providers and facilities must continue to maintain a very high vigilance for communicable diseases (including SARS) and work together to ensure that the health care system can respond effectively.

New directives have been developed to assist facilities and health care practitioners to begin to practice in the “new normal”. **These directives take effect as of 0800 hours Friday May 16, 2003.**

The directives for the acute care sector are transitional in nature and maintain the facility categorization system. This reflects the evolving understanding of acute care treatment of the disease. The directives for community health care providers and agencies, CCACs, paramedics and ambulance communication services, and non-acute facilities outline precautions to be invoked routinely as well as measures to be invoked in the event of another outbreak. Where appropriate, these directives also outline practices to be used in the transition period.

All practitioners and healthcare workers can expect ongoing communication from the Ontario government as new information on the identification and treatment of this and other communicable diseases becomes available.