



## COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

### Does Fraser Health endorse health care providers purchasing their own PPE?

Fraser Health does not recommend staff or physicians purchasing or procuring their own personal PPE. In order to ensure the health and safety of health care providers, it is essential that PPE used in Fraser Health meets safety standards. Using PPE provided by Fraser Health helps to ensure that it will provide you with the level of protection required; you are trained on its appropriate use; disposal and/or cleaning/reprocessing protocols are in place; and that it is appropriate for the care environment. There are specific minimum requirements for selection of gowns, masks, eye protection and respirators that must be met to ensure your safety in the workplace.

### What if I already purchased my own eye protection, can I still use it?

Yes if your eye protection is CSA approved, latex-free and able to be cleaned and disinfected you may use it.

#### Remember:

- Prescription eyeglasses are not appropriate eye protection
- Select close-fitting eye protection that provides maximum coverage of your eyes

### What is Fraser Health doing to make sure we don't run out of PPE?

While supply chain is securing PPE from a variety of resources, internally we are:

- Working with target departments to implement alternative N95 models, reusable half-face respirators, and powered air-purifying respirators.
- Reviewing PPE donations to ensure they meet our minimum standards prior to deployment.
- Assessing non-standard PPE procurement to identify suitability for use within our operations and how best to deploy it.

We are receiving additional PPE supplies daily and maintaining these supplies in a number of areas including locally in your department, at centralized secure locations at your site and in the main health authority distribution warehouse. Supplies are being closely monitored to ensure that if levels are low at a particular site, items can be moved from the warehouse or alternate location to support your needs.

### Can we make our own procedure masks or respirators?

Health and Safety does not recommend or approve making your own personal protective equipment. There are certain standards which regulate PPE items and ensure its efficiency. For example, procedure masks are certified by ASTM F2100 standard for fluid resistance, particle filtration efficiency and bacterial filtration efficiency. Self-made masks are not certified by the standard thus they are not appropriate to use to protect staff members from being exposed to workplace hazards.

### I am developing skin irritations and discomfort from wearing a procedure mask throughout my shifts, is it ok to use an "ear saver device" (e.g. headband with notches or buttons on which to secure my mask ear loops)?

We recognize that depending on the fit of your mask it could rub the skin and start to cause irritation. We are reviewing what can be done to help prevent this skin irritation and will provide more information on this soon. With respect to the use of fabric headbands with buttons or plastic headbands with hooks for securing procedure mask ear loops to the head. If you choose to use one of these devices please remember you must launder fabric headbands or clean plastic ones with a regular household disinfectant.

### What are some practical strategies of conserving PPE?

- If possible, choose re-usable PPE items which can be thoroughly disinfected and reused, such as eye protection and cloth yellow fluid resistant isolation gowns.
- Ensure you are using the right PPE at the right time!

If you still have questions, email [safety@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:safety@fraserhealth.ca)