

April 24, 2020

To: Faculty, Residents and Staff in Mental Health Program

From: Jitender Sareen MD, Medical Director, HSC and WRHA Mental Health Program

RE: Evening and Weekend Inter-facility transfers to Winnipeg adult inpatient mental health units (HSC, SBH, VGH) from Emergency Departments (ED), Urgent care (UC) and Crisis Response Centre (CRC) during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Please note that the weekday daytime process will remain the same. During the pandemic, there are substantial challenges with respect to inter-facility transfers for psychiatric admissions due to:

1. Ever changing criteria for COVID-19 screening criteria.
2. Variable structure, staffing and isolation capacity for COVID -19suspect & positive patients.

Please ensure that you review this website prior to your night or weekend call shift to ensure that you are aware of the latest COVID-19 ED/UC algorithm:

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/COVID-19-update.pdf>

We will be making the following changes for evening and weekend call. Prior to the patient being sent to the receiving site, all inter-facility transfers between sites during evenings and weekends will require:

1. Sending site on call psychiatrist to receiving site on call psychiatrist handover
2. Sending site psychiatrist (or psychiatry resident, or physician assistant) to inpatient nurse handover
3. Psychiatry liaison nursing (PLN) or mental health clinician (Crisis Response Centre) to receiving site nursing handover.

The handover will include:

1. Psychiatric management
2. COVID-19 assessment in the ED/UC/CRC and management on the inpatient unit.
3. Physical health issues that require management (eg. diabetes or other physical health conditions)

*There has to be documentation in the chart with respect to who was involved in the handover.*

If there is disagreement between the psychiatrists with respect to whether the patient should be considered COVID suspect or on isolation, the sending site psychiatrist may need to consult Infectious Disease or Infection Prevention and Control. If there are questions, the psychiatrist on call for COVID units (HSC paging – 204-787-2071) or Administrator on call (Dr. Sareen 204-294-7344; or delegate) can be contacted ideally between 0800-midnight.

Notification to Patient Transport with respect to COVID-19 status at the time of requesting transport must be provided.

Finally, due to limited staffing on inpatient unit during the night, inter-facility transfers will occur *as much as possible* between 0800-midnight.