

Adult Admissions to Inpatient Units at Holland Bloorview

Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

Why has Holland Bloorview started to admit adults requiring complex continuing care and rehabilitation services?

With intensive care units (ICUs) full across the province and record numbers of ICU beds occupied by seriously ill COVID-19 patients, children's hospitals are being asked to help share the load. This is a clear sign of the current critical state of the province's health system and is unprecedented in our hospital's 122-year history. Admitting adults in order to free capacity in other hospitals is a way to support Ontario's pandemic response and we've put in the work to prepare for this exact scenario.

Are we admitting adult patients who have tested positive for COVID-19?

No, the clients being transferred to Holland Bloorview do not have COVID-19. These adult clients require complex continuing care or rehabilitation services. We are working with Ontario Health and acute care hospitals to ensure that we are admitting individuals that we are best equipped to care for. We will also maintain our strict COVID-19 safety measures, increasing them if necessary in accordance with guidance from Toronto Public Health.

Are we ready to admit adult clients to Holland Bloorview?

Yes. As part of Ontario's healthcare system we participate in multiple planning tables where we receive information on the state of hospital capacity. We knew that it was a possibility that we could be called on to admit clients that are outside our usual scope. Members of the Rehabilitation and CCC team, operations managers, our infection prevention and control team, senior management and others have been preparing through training, education and assessment of equipment needs. Our complex continuing care team has long been safely caring for adult clients who were initially admitted to Holland Bloorview as children and continue to receive care here until they can be transferred to an appropriate adult setting (sometimes referred to as "alternate level of care" or "ALC").

How many adult clients could Holland Bloorview be caring for at one time?

With what we know right now, we can admit four adult clients at any one time. This is in addition to our ALC clients (see answer above).

Will this mean increased waitlists for pediatric clients in our inpatient units?

We will be maintaining beds for pending admissions to avoid disrupting regular patient flow. While adult surgeries and procedures have been cancelled across Ontario, paediatric care continues in the five children's hospitals including Holland Bloorview.

Sunnybrook Hospital has built a field hospital. Is Holland Bloorview planning doing the same?

No.

How old are the adult clients being admitted?

We are admitting adults aged 40 and under that require complex continuing care and rehabilitation services. We are working with Ontario Health and acute care hospitals to ensure we are admitting individuals for which we are best equipped to care.

How long will we be caring for adult clients at Holland Bloorview?

We will regularly review our client census, the demand for pediatric beds, and capacity to take adult clients in order to support the system pressures. While we don't have a clear timeline, we will continue to work with system partners to assess system need and capacity. Once the surge has passed and the burden on regional ICUs has lightened, we anticipate that we will transfer adult clients into appropriate hospital and community settings.

Will this change affect the quality of care that we provide to pediatric clients and families?

No, we will be able to continue providing high-quality care. Our careful preparation, in place since the beginning of the pandemic, and accelerated in recent months, has positioned us well to continue providing high-quality care. We have been preparing by evaluating any training, education and equipment needs.

What is the caregiver presence policy for adult clients?

The caregiver presence policy for adults is the same as for pediatric clients. Our current policy: "Inpatient clients can identify up to two family caregivers, aged 16 or older, to be a part of their on-site care. Only one family caregiver can stay overnight."

Will there come a time when Holland Bloorview is asked to assess which pediatric clients can be discharged earlier to support the admission of even more adult patients?

We hope we will not be in this position, and as of right now there is no indication that this will happen. We are looking at this specific scenario and many other possible ones when planning for the coming months.

Could children/youth be placed in shared rooms with adult clients?

We are striving to keep adult clients separate from pediatric clients. We consider a variety of factors when assigning rooms, including medical needs, infection control, unit census and others. We are trying our best to keep adult and pediatric clients separate, but cannot guarantee that we will always be able to do so.