

Media Release

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For Immediate Release

RESIDENTS REMINDED TO USE PRIMARY CARE FOR NON-URGENT ISSUES

WINDSOR, ON. _ The Essex County Medical Society (ECMS) is reminding residents to continue to contact their family physician or nurse practitioner, many of whom are continuing to offer virtual care, and in-person visits as-needed.

“Emergency Departments and Ambulance Services are for life or limb-threatening symptoms. I encourage the public to first contact their family doctor or nurse practitioner for all non-emergency symptoms. New symptoms do not necessarily mean there is an emergency. Please consider calling primary care first for advice,” said ECMS President Dr. Jennifer Bondy.

It is important to note that while family doctors and nurse practitioners are now permitted to see more patients in person, a combination of virtual care and some in-person visits remains the current norm. Primary care providers must look to make sure adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available for office staff as well as ensuring their office space is able to accommodate patients without raising concerns about physical distancing and infection control needs. However, primary care providers remain the important first door for patients outside of emergencies. Also, unattached patients, or those who cannot access their own provider, can visit the ehealthwindsorsex.ca website, to find providers who are accepting new patients.

Non-urgent medical issues which can be addressed through primary care:

- Urinary tract Infection (UTI)
- Ingrown toenail
- Prescription fills
- Earache or ear infection
- Minor burns
- Pink eye
- Cough/colds/sore throat

When to visit the Emergency Department:

- Chest pain (or tightness in the chest)
- Difficulty breathing (when doing very little or resting)
- Continuous vomiting (or severe diarrhea or signs of dehydration)

- Sudden severe headache/weakness (vision problems, numbness/tingling, dizziness, trouble speaking)
- New confusion (and disorientation)
- Stiff neck (and sensitivity to light)
- A broken bone (sprain or wound that needs stitches)
- Seizures (or convulsions)
- Infant under 3 months with fever over 38C or 100.4F (or has a fever and is difficult to wake)
- Children age 2 to 17 with difficulty breathing, fever/stiff neck, dehydration, ingested a toxic substance

If you require emergent care, please do not hesitate to call 9-1-1 or visit the Emergency Department at Windsor Regional Hospital Met or Ouellette Campus, or at Erie Shores HealthCare. Medical professionals are there to care for you, just as they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. The hospitals continue to have enhanced safety measures and infection control protocols in place to ensure a safe care environment for all patients and staff.

If you believe you are experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, patients can self-refer to one of the area's COVID-19 Assessment Centres. The WRH Assessment Centre is located at the Ouellette Campus next to the Emergency Department. It is open Monday to Friday from 9 am to 6 pm and Saturdays and Sundays 9 am to 4 pm. (Please check www.wrh.on.ca/COVID19AssessmentCentre as hours are subject to change based on volumes). The Erie Shores HealthCare Assessment Centre is located on the Hospital premises, and is open 7 days per week from 9am – 6pm.

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