

COVID Unit Admission Process

There is now a well-developed pathway for patients who are suspected or known to have COVID to be admitted to hospital. At the Halifax Infirmary, the COVID Unit is 8.3 with 31 beds. A separate COVID Unit is being set up at the DGH.

The intention is that all patients who either test or screen positive for COVID will be admitted to the COVID Unit until their swabs return negative. Exceptions to this will include some Cardiology, CV Surgery and Psychiatry patients. This includes patients who's primary issue is not COVID related (eg. A patient with a hip fracture who screens positive for COVID will be admitted to the COVID unit until the swabs return negative). In essence, all confirmed or suspected COVID patients will be admitted to the COVID Unit unless they are unstable from a non-COVID condition requiring the care of another unit.

This will entail a significant change to the current admission processes. For this process, "**COVID patient**" refers to any patient who either tests positive or screens positive (using the current case definition) for COVID. At the Halifax Infirmary Emergency Department, the expectation is that the **disposition for all COVID patients will be completed within 2 hours** as per existing NSHA guidelines. COVID patients requiring admission will be admitted to the **COVID Unit** under a co-management model. The MRP will be the **Inpatient COVID Unit Physician** and a **Primary Admitting Service (PAS)**. The PAS may have to complete investigations normally completed in the ED on the COVID Unit. The expectation is that the PAS will **transfer patients out of the COVID Unit within 2 hours of a negative COVID swab**.

For patients requiring admission to a service at the Halifax Infirmary from an ED outside of the HI, the first call will be to the **PAS** to accept the patient. The 2nd call will be to the **Inpatient COVID Unit Physician**. The patient will then be transferred and admitted to the COVID Unit where they will be seen by the **PAS**. The sending physician will be required to complete the attached PPO prior to transferring the patient to the COVID Unit.