

## MEDIA RELEASE

December 4, 2017

### Ensuring Patients' Access to Care over the Holidays

The onset of flu season and the increase in social gatherings over the holidays means healthcare providers can expect a surge in the number of people seeking care at Christmas time. With physicians' offices closed for the holidays, many of these people seek help from the RMH Emergency Department, which is open 24/7. There are also health services available in the community that might be more appropriate, depending on a patient's needs.

The CKL Family Health Organization's After Hours Clinic in **Lindsay** (55 Angeline Street N.):

Dec. 24	9:00am-noon	Dec. 27	6:00pm-9:00pm	Dec. 30	9:00am-noon
Dec. 25	CLOSED	Dec. 28	6:00pm-9:00pm	Dec. 31	9:00am-noon
Dec. 26	9:00am-noon	Dec. 29	6:00pm-9:00pm	Jan. 1	CLOSED

The CKL Family Health Organization's After Hours Clinic in **Bobcaygeon** (85 Bolton St.):

Dec. 20	5:00pm-8:00pm	Dec. 28	1:00pm-4:00pm	Jan. 3	5:00pm-8:00pm
Dec. 27	5:00pm-8:00pm	Dec. 29	9:00am-noon		

(Regular hours of operation are Wednesday evenings 5:00pm-8:00pm.)

The Kawartha North Family Health Team office in **Bobcaygeon** will be open to all patients from both Kawartha North offices on Dec. 28 for acute access 8:00am-11:30am (FHT patients only, no appointment necessary). Normal hours resume on Jan. 2.

The Kawartha North Family Health Team's After Hours Clinic in **Bobcaygeon** (100 East St.) will be open on Dec. 28 1:00pm-3:00pm.

(Regular hours of operation are Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:00pm-7:00pm.)

The Kawartha North Family Health Team's After Hours Clinic in **Fenelon Falls** (at the Pharmasave) will be open on Dec. 29 9:00am-noon.

(Regular hours are Fridays 9:00am-noon.)

The Community Care Health & Care Network Community Health Centre in **Lindsay** (108 Angeline St. S.) will be open to see registered clients of the CHC on:

Dec. 25	CLOSED	Jan. 1	CLOSED
Dec. 26	CLOSED	Jan. 2	8:30am-4:30pm
Dec. 27	8:30am-7:00pm	Jan. 3	8:30am-4:30pm
Dec. 28	8:30am-4:30pm	Jan. 4	8:30am-4:30pm
Dec. 29	8:30am-4:30pm	Jan. 5	8:30am-4:30pm

People may also speak to a Registered Nurse by phone (toll-free) by calling Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007)

You may also consider calling your family's pharmacist for advice.

### **Understanding Influenza (The Flu)**

Influenza is an acute respiratory illness caused by a virus. Influenza symptoms include fever, cough, weakness, body aches and headache. Influenza can lead to pneumonia.

Most people with the flu are strongly encouraged to avoid the Emergency Department to prevent spreading the flu to others, but it can be difficult to know when and where to seek medical help.

To help people know when to stay home and when to seek help, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care developed an online self-screening tool at [ontario.ca/flu](http://ontario.ca/flu). The website also offers tips for managing flu symptoms at home, which include drinking lots of fluids and taking basic pain or fever symptom relievers.

### **When to seek medical help**

If you do not start to feel better after a few days or if your symptoms get worse, you should:

- Call your health care provider
- Call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 (toll free) TTY: 1-866-797-0007
- Visit one of the local After Hours Clinics

### **When to come to the hospital**

Adults should come to the Emergency Department if they have flu symptoms and have difficulty breathing, can't tolerate fluids or are concerned.

Children should be brought to the Emergency Department if their symptoms improve and then suddenly become worse. In addition, seek care if you notice any of the following signs:

- fast or difficult breathing
- bluish or dark-coloured lips or skin
- drowsiness to the point where he or she cannot be easily wakened
- severe crankiness or not wanting to be held or
- dehydration – not drinking enough fluids and not passing urine regularly.

Patients are also advised to **bring all medication** you are taking when you come to the ER.

### **Protect yourself and others against Influenza**

If you haven't been vaccinated, please consider getting the flu shot to protect yourself and your loved ones. Contact your healthcare provider or participating pharmacist.

To help protect patients and the RMH team against the flu, RMH has launched a new policy that strongly encourages all staff, physicians, volunteers and students who are not vaccinated against the flu to **wear a surgical mask while in patient care areas**.