



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
(Monday 16th March 2020)

PHA implements safety measures following confirmed case of Coronavirus (COVID19)

Effective immediately, the following measures are being implemented following the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Bahamas. These immediate changes are intended to minimize person-to-person contact and increase the safety of patients, staff, and public.

Access to the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH)

- Patients and visitors must enter the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) through the new Critical Care Block entrance.
- All Maternity patients including maternity day cases must enter through the Maternity Entrance.
- Only Dialysis patients will be permitted to use the Medical Block entrance prior to their appointment times.
- All staff are asked to access the hospital via the Legacy entrance or the former Administration entrance. Staff are required to always wear their ID badge.

PMH Emergency Department & Ambulance Services

The public is advised that **ONLY** emergency cases will be managed during this period. Additionally, the public is asked to only use Ambulance Services for emergencies. **The public should contact their personal physicians for non-emergencies during the day and Accident & Emergency after hours.**

Protocols for staff returning to work

Staff who recently travelled abroad are asked to contact their Head of Department via phone and to self-isolate for 14 days. At the end of the isolation period, staff will be screened by Employee Health before they will be allowed to resume their work duties.

Outpatient Services, Specialty Clinics and Surgeries

All Outpatient services at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Center have been suspended including the following:

- Dental Clinic
- Outpatient Physiotherapy

Visitation

Recognizing that asymptomatic individuals often appear healthy, prospective hospital visitation is strongly discouraged for the health and safety of all. If you must visit, the following schedule is effective immediately.

Intensive Care and Neonatal Intensive Care Units visitation will take place between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. daily for fifteen minutes. All patients are allowed one approved visitor per day.

Visitors will be screened upon arrival which will include a temperature check and a brief Q&A/declaration interview. Persons presenting with fever or exhibiting flu-like symptoms will be denied entry for visitation. It is anticipated that screening measures employed will cause some delay in approved entry.

In Grand Bahama, visitation is allowed only on the Pediatrics Ward until further notice. Persons requiring information on their relatives are asked to call 350-6700.

Visitation at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre and Geriatric Hospital are hereby suspended.

Members of the public are asked to desist from utilizing our hospitals if they are experiencing flu-like symptoms and call the hotline (below).

The public is encouraged to continue required hygiene practices, including handwashing for 20 seconds, use of hand sanitizer with an alcohol content of 60% or more after touching surfaces, door handles, and other objects. Disinfect your phones, counters, and bathrooms regularly. We also encourage you to practice social distancing, self-isolation if you experience flu-like symptoms and fever and avoiding gatherings.

The PHA thanks the public for their support during this time. Further announcements and updates on hospital services will be disseminated as it becomes necessary. Members of the public are asked to contact the COVID-19 Hotline Numbers at 376.9350 and 376.9387 for further guidance and assistance