



April 1, 2020

Dr. David Williams,
Chief Medical Officer of Health
393 University Avenue, 21st Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2M2
Email: Dr.David.Williams@ontario.ca

Dear Dr. Williams

Re: Directive #5 for Public Hospitals

OPSEU received Directive #5 when it was issued on March 30. We received a second, amended version late on March 31, as attached. I write on behalf of OPSEU members in the health care sector to request urgent clarification regarding the application and scope of the Directive.

Directive #5 implements certain precautions and procedures for health care workers, as detailed in the attached appendix. The amended Directive add the words "as applicable to nurses represented by the Ontario Nurses Association..." (page 3). Both versions of the Directive also provide that, in the event of a shortage of PPE, government and employers are responsible for developing contingency plans "in consultation with ONA."

It is not clear if the protections detailed in Directive #5 apply to all health care workers, or to workers represented by ONA. There is also confusion created with respect to the role of ONA going forward.

As you know, there are a number of bargaining agents in the health care sector, and each has the statutory responsibility and right to speak for its respective members. With respect, it cannot be intended that protections will be accorded to workers based on their bargaining agent, or that one bargaining agent will represent or negotiate for others.

The possible confusion created by this Directive undermines our ability to work together in a coordinated way during this crisis. On behalf of OPSEU members, I request you take immediate steps to clarify Directive #5.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Smokey Thomas".

Smokey Thomas,
President

C: Christine Elliott, Minister of Health
Emergency Management

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