Statement from the Ontario Hospital Association re: Critical Care Capacity and the COVID-19 Pandemic

In the days ahead, Ontario faces a turning point in the war against COVID-19, a deadly virus that has overwhelmed hospitals and critical care capacity in countries across the globe. Thanks to the Government of Ontario, planning and mobilization is underway across our health care system. Additional critical care capacity is being brought on-line. However, if we as a province cannot moderate the rate of growth of new COVID-19 cases requiring hospitalization, Ontario’s critical care services face potentially overwhelming odds.

It is the duty of everyone in Ontario to take action -today- to protect the finite critical care capacity needed to sustain the lives of patients needing hospitalization because of COVID-19. These patients won’t be strangers. They will be our parents, grandparents and other family members, our neighbours, and our friends.

In the face of a declared public emergency, with tens of thousands of people now arriving home after March Break, every resident of Ontario must listen to the advice of public health experts. With social distancing, we can reduce the spread of COVID-19. Stay home. Avoid public spaces. Avoid physical interaction with others. If we all follow these simple rules we can, and we will, save the lives of our elderly, people with serious chronic conditions and people who are immune compromised.

With so much information available it is important that people use authoritative sources to inform themselves. You can read more here on COVID-19, and here you can read about the difference between self-monitoring, self-isolation and isolation and how you can act now to protect the lives of yourself and others.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the biggest public health threat in Ontario’s history. The decisions all of us make today to prevent its spread and protect the most vulnerable will be the legacy we leave to future generations. Please listen to what the hospitals of Ontario have to say. It is up to the many to protect the lives of the few.

- Anthony Dale, President & CEO, Ontario Hospital Association

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