



PANDEMIC PLAN COVID-19

Introduction:

A wide range of people in the health sector will have to respond to a pandemic. StL Diagnostic Imaging has a plan in place to respond to the demands placed on our sector from COVID-19 so that we can provide essential imaging services for our long-term care, retirement homes, hospitals, correctional facilities, home care and our clinic outpatient providers.

Radiology plays a crucial role in the diagnosis of disease, gauging disease extent and severity, monitoring response to treatment, and assessing for treatment complications. Chest radiography plays an especially important role. The provision of mobile diagnostic imaging services will be crucial.

Communications:

StL Diagnostic Imaging is an Independent Health Facility. We receive MOH bulletins for both Health Care providers and IHFs. We subscribe, monitor and receive bulletins from Public Health Ontario. There is a MOH hotline for providers available 24 hours. We are corporate members of AdvantAge Ontario, the Ontario Long Term Care Association as well as members of our own regulatory Colleges including the Ontario Medical Association and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

Essential communication bulletins from StL Diagnostic Imaging will be faxed or emailed to inform all clients of any possible service restrictions and limitations when necessary.

Management will be available by telephone to answer any questions or concerns during this time. The contact person primarily responsible for pandemic operations is Tina St. Louis ((905) 332-6900 or tstlouis@stlimaging.ca).

Staffing:

Mobile Radiography is a valued service, providing essential diagnostic imaging to patients who are not easily transportable. This will lessen the impact of additional visits to doctor's offices and hospital emergency departments. It is anticipated that the need for this service will dramatically increase in the event of this pandemic. However, it is realized that challenges regarding the well-being of personnel may impact the ability for StL Diagnostic Imaging to respond to service demands.

StL has communicated to our staff that we are in a pandemic situation and our pandemic plan is in effect. All vacation and time off requests have been cancelled and all available casual relief/part time staff have been called to assist with workload. We are adhering to all recommendations issued by the Government of Canada and the Minister of Public Health and Safety including current travel restrictions, self-quarantine and self-monitoring regulations.

It is anticipated that this COVID-19 outbreak will undoubtedly put a severe strain on the provision of all medical services. Cancelling holidays, calling in all staff, extending hours of operation will mitigate these difficulties to some extent. We also realize that it will not be possible during these times to suddenly hire additional staff and for this reason the implementation of this plan will be within the confines of the staffing level in place. Additional strain will be placed on the provision of these services should any of our staff become ill during this period or have to quarantine.

Triage our Services and Extended hours of Operation:

Our supervisory staff in conjunction with management and the radiologists triage all imaging requests and priority will be given to patients with respiratory symptoms and acute medical problems. Non-urgent requests will be suspended until the crisis is over.

It is essential that all requisitions have pertinent clinical information and only those that are properly completed (including the reason for the need for acute investigation) will be done. All requisitions with incomplete information will be returned.

StL Diagnostic Imaging hours will be extended as necessary to the best of our ability in order to provide the optimum possible service to our patients.

Infection Control Practices:

StL Diagnostic Imaging adheres to all infection control practices as mandated in the IPAC checklist developed by Public Health Ontario. This includes adherence to the recommendations for most recent update for the use of Personal Protective Equipment for care of individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

All imaging personnel are required to clean imaging equipment with an anti-septic cleanser after every patient imaging examination. Isolation and infection control precautions are practiced, especially for patients with febrile respiratory illness.

We adhere to the MOH directives on infectious diseases including mandatory screening for our personnel entering all long term care, hospitals and home care during COVID-19 pandemic. This includes full use of protective apparel (mask, gowns, gloves) and safe work practices.

Summary:

StL Diagnostic Imaging understands the ethical ramifications of pandemics, including social disruptions to which a pandemic gives rise, the allocation of scarce health care resources and the duty of health care professionals to provide care even when it places our own health at risk.

StL Diagnostic Imaging provides services to those in need and we fully intend to provide this care to the best of our abilities should our services be required during a pandemic.

This plan will be updated as necessary during the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.