

# Memorandum

**SUBJECT:** CorHealth COVID-19 Vascular Memo # 1 - **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN ONTARIO APPROACH TO MANAGING VASCULAR SURGERY DURING COVID-19**

**TO:** Vascular Surgery Program & Medical Leadership and Vascular Interventional Radiology Program & Medical Leadership from 20 hospitals with vascular programs, Vascular Leadership Council, Clinical Advisory Committee (vascular members), CitiCall Ontario

**FROM:** Office of the CEO, CorHealth Ontario

**DATE:** March 27, 2020

**TIME:** 3:00PM

**VERSION:** #1

DISCLAIMER: The information in this document represents general guidance based on current practice and available evidence. The document was developed by provincial clinical experts, reflecting best knowledge at the time of writing, and is subject to revision based on changing circumstances and conditions. This information is *intended to be "guidance rather than directive,"* and is *not meant to replace clinical judgment*. Reference to Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in this document should not replace or supersede the IPAC and PPE protocols or directives in place at your hospital.

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## Recommendations for an Ontario Approach to Managing Vascular Surgery during COVID-19

### PREAMBLE

COVID-19 is an unprecedented crisis and it poses significant risk to the community as the landscape is rapidly evolving. The Ministry of Health has requested that all hospitals ramp down non-essential services, elective surgeries and other non-emergent clinical activity. CorHealth Ontario (CorHealth) has been engaging with vascular experts and stakeholders across the province to discuss how best to preserve health care capacity in light of increasing COVID-19 cases requiring health care. The following guidance and recommendations reflect advice from this engagement.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Keeping front line health care providers healthy and patients protected is vital.
2. Minimizing the impact of COVID-19 on the mortality and morbidity of patients with vascular disease is a priority.
3. Aligning with province- and hospital-specific infection prevention and control policies and protocols that exist is important.
4. Promoting clinical activities aimed at preserving hospital resources (i.e. health care human resources, personal protective equipment, procedure rooms, Intensive Care Units, Emergency Departments) is a priority.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Vascular Surgery Procedures:
  - a. Hospitals performing vascular procedures should defer all procedures **with the exception of emergent/urgent procedures**. Key patients requiring urgent procedures include those with:
    - a. Large aortic aneurysms
    - b. Symptomatic carotid artery stenosis
    - c. Chronic Limb Threatening Ischemia or Critical limb ischemia

2. Vascular Surgery Wait Lists:
  - a. Regular triage by vascular physicians and/or designates to ensure patients are informed and deferred cases are reviewed regularly and as appropriate. Consider initiating regular follow-up with patients (using telemedicine) who have had their procedure deferred.
3. Vascular Surgery (VS)/ Vascular Interventional Radiology (VIR) health human resources:
  - a. Hospitals should maintain communication with other vascular centres in the province in the event that supports need to be shared with other centres. Support could include cross-credentialing of physicians and/or transfer of patients between hospitals.
4. Outpatient Clinics:
  - a. Hospitals should implement remote consultation practices (telemedicine or virtual clinics) for routine or other non-urgent issues.
  - b. Hospitals should continue to pre-screen patients prior to being seen in a clinic in alignment with OMA or other COVID-19 screening protocols

## RESOURCES

CorHealth has developed a [COVID-19 Resource Centre](#) for Cardiac, Stroke and Vascular stakeholders. We encourage you to check the Resource Centre often as we are continually updating it with new information and links to other trusted sources. If there are additional resources that you would like us to post, please send them to CorHealth at [service@corhealthontario.ca](mailto:service@corhealthontario.ca).