



College of Respiratory  
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## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AMONG HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS?

Despite access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), healthcare providers are contracting COVID-19 at an unacceptable rate, and we need your help to try and turn that around.

A report released by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) revealed that nationally just under 20% of those who tested positive were healthcare providers (16.7% in Ontario)<sup>i</sup>. (CIHI, 2020). The majority of those cases are among those providers working in long-term care and retirement homes, which aligns with the significant number of outbreaks in that setting. The Ontario government's revision to [Directive 5](#) on October 5th aimed to mitigate the risk to non-regulated healthcare providers by providing them access to N95 masks. However, infections among healthcare providers, both regulated and non-regulated, continues.

Due to the significant degree of community spread, it is difficult to determine the exact source of viral exposure in healthcare providers. Nevertheless, a certain percentage is decidedly due to close contact at work with a confirmed case. This raises many questions. Is PPE not as readily available as it should be? Are there times when Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) protocols are not being followed?

The CRTO and the Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) would like to hear what IPAC-related challenges you are experiencing at your workplace, as well as any suggestions for improvement. We all want to ensure that healthcare providers can safely carry out their vital role during this pandemic.

If you wish to send your perspectives on this matter to the CRTO, you may email Carole Hamp, RRT – Deputy Registrar at [hamp@crto.on.ca](mailto:hamp@crto.on.ca). We will pass this information on to the EOC.

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<sup>i</sup> [CIHI. \(Sept. 3, 2020\). COVID-19: Cases and deaths among health care workers in Canada.](#)