

Dear colleagues,

The past week has seen a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases both within our community and LHSC. I am sure I'm not alone in a rising sense of apprehension and dread that the collective "curve" continues to rise. LHSC remains committed to doing everything within its power to ensure the health and safety of every individual, but this cannot be done without you.

My communication of last week calling on all of us to maintain the utmost diligence and discipline around public health measures has been met with some distress. I want to acknowledge explicitly that people are under enormous pressure at every level of the organization, both personally and professionally. My choice to use direct language was not pointed at any person or professional group. It was intended to convey a sense of urgency that I felt and continue to feel the organization must demonstrate. This accountability applies to all of us, from me all the way through the organization.

I've said many times that health care is a burnout industry, even outside the scope of a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is an historic human tragedy and the need for keeping ourselves and each other safe has never been more critical. As health-care workers, you are the most treasured resource on the planet in 2020 and without your health and safety, our community will suffer. That is why there is such urgency in ensuring our every action and choice is made with purpose, and not out of fatigue. Quite aside from this, I care about all of you, and about your families and loved ones. It is my fervent wish that not one of our 14,000 colleagues would end up a victim, either of the virus or of the terrible social consequences of this pandemic.

And so I urge you to please continue to follow the protocols that have been designed and implemented to ensure the health and safety of every individual at LHSC. The most respectful thing we can do as health-care workers for those we serve—and for those we love—is to protect ourselves and each other. I am going to reach out directly to our community with similar messages as the need for collective accountability does not end within our walls.

I remain forever inspired, indebted, and in awe of your continued resolve and sacrifice. This is a defining era for LHSC and I know I speak for our entire community when I say that I am grateful for you and everything you do.

Dr. Paul Woods
President and CEO