

MEDIA RELEASE**April 15, 2020****St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital to open COVID-19 Assessment Centre in St. Thomas**

(St. Thomas, ON) St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital is opening a COVID-19 Assessment Centre for patients referred for COVID-19 testing by a primary care provider or Southwestern Public Health. The COVID-19 Assessment Centre is located onsite at St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital through a dedicated entrance off Hepburn Avenue.

Visits to the COVID-19 Assessment Centre is only by referral and appointment from a primary care provider or Southwestern Public Health. It does not function as a walk-in service. *Patients who arrive at the Assessment Centre without a referral and appointment will be instructed to follow-up with their primary care provider or public health for an assessment.* Referred patients will undergo an assessment and COVID-19 swab test, and will be instructed to self-isolate while waiting for the results.

The COVID-19 Assessment Centre at STEGH will begin operation on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 and will operate at least four hours/day, seven days a week. “We are taking this step in St. Thomas in response to the province’s enhanced testing strategy to protect the most vulnerable in our community and those who protect them, like our frontline health care workers and first responders,” says Robert Biron, President and CEO. “The goal is to identify cases early, contain them and prevent putting more people at risk.”

The COVID-19 Assessment Centre is completely accessible/barrier-free. To minimize the number of people in the Assessment Centre space, patients are asked to come on their own, unless they require a guardian or support person.

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19:

- Self-isolate and monitor your symptoms
- Access the online COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool for further instruction: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/#q0>
- Access Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000
- Contact your primary care provider and/or Southwestern Public Health
- If you are feeling severely unwell, call 911

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