



Restricted use of Surgical Masks

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To: All Staff and VMOs - Hospitals
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The COVID-19 situation in Australia continues to evolve. Fortunately and directly aided by the valued cooperation of our patients, staff and our VMOs during a period of significant uncertainty, we are beginning to see the first signs of the COVID-19 crisis easing.

With the progressive re-introduction of elective surgery, it is imperative that we continue to preserve our stock of Personal Protective Equipment - particularly masks. As the whole industry continues to experience significant supply chain challenges, it is timely to reiterate the strategies employed by Calvary on 24 March 2020.

Alternate Masks L2 vs. L3

- Current stock of L2 masks is better than L3, so these masks will be used interchangeably during this time.

Implement prolonged/extended use of facemasks

Extended use of facemasks is the practice of wearing the same facemask for repeated close contact encounters with several different patients, without removing the facemask between patient encounters.

For theatre:

- Limit the number of staff within the theatre and cease changing staff through the procedure to reduce the number of masks required.
- Those at immediate surgical site i.e. Surgeon, assistant and scrub should wear masks.
- Those at the immediate airway should wear surgical masks.
- Clinicians away from these areas should not wear masks particularly for short lower risk procedures.
- All masks should be worn for multiple patients for up to 4 hours (gowns and gloves must be changed).
- Masks must be removed if become soiled, torn, moist or difficult to breathe through.
- Masks must not be touched while wearing them.

Thank you for your patience at this challenging time, and for all that you do in the interest of caring for the most vulnerable in our community.

The Department of Health released Guidance on the use of PPE in hospitals during COVID-19 outbreak on 24 April 2020, which can be found [here](#).

For up-to-date information for all staff and VMOs, check in to Calvary's COVID-19 Information and Resources site for staff regularly at: www.calvarystaffupdates.org.au