For Immediate Release

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Booking COVID-19 tests at the Halton Healthcare Priority Testing & Assessment Centres

More than 7,000 individuals have received an assessment, counselling or testing for COVID-19 at one of the Halton Healthcare Priority Testing and Assessment Centres. These Centres, located at Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, opened in mid-March and operate on an appointment only basis.

"We want to reassure our communities that no one will be denied an appointment," said Joan Jickling, Director, Quality and Patient Relations. "We saw a dramatic increase in the number of people requesting tests after the province announced more widespread availability of testing for COVID-19 beginning May 24. For the ongoing safety of our patients and to prevent crowding, testing will continue to be offered by appointment only."

"Pre-booked appointments will ensure we have the appropriate PPE and test kits available and reduce the impact of having long line-ups or large gatherings in the hospital," said Dr. Ananda Ghosh, Infectious Diseases Consultant, Quality & Patient Safety. "The use of appointments also allows patients to be tested in a safe and reasonable manner without compromising any privacy or physical distancing guidelines."

Individuals can book their own test or be referred to a Testing and Assessment Centre by a physician or Halton Region Public Health. All bookings for the Halton Healthcare Priority Testing and Assessment Centres are received through a central intake phone line dedicated to this purpose.

The COVID-19 test is completed using a nasopharyngeal swab to collect a clinical test sample. To collect the sample, the swab is inserted in the nostril and then rotated for a specified period time to collect secretions. The swab is then removed, placed into a sterile container and sent out for analysis. While the test can be uncomfortable, it can be completed in a relatively short period of time.

Residents of Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills can call the COVID-19 Hotline at 905-203-7963 to book an appointment. Additional information about the testing centres and other COVID-19 related information is available on the Halton Healthcare website –
www.haltonhealthcare.com.

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